

THE:CHILDREN OF:LIGHT

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THE CHILDREN OF LIGHT

THE CHILDREN OF LIGHT

BY
FLORENCE CONVERSE



" For the children of this world
are in their generation wiser
than the children of light."

St. Luke xvi. 8.

BOSTON: HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

1912

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chi

TO VIDA D. SCUDDER
WHO GAVE ME HER BOOK,
"SOCIALISM AND SACRIFICE,"
THIS
FOR A THANK-OFFERING.

"Tu m'hai di servo tratto a libertate
per tutte quelle vie, per tutti i modi,
che di ciò fare avei la potestate."

DANTE, *Il Paradiso*, xxxi.

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BOOK I
CELESTIAL LIGHT

“ There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth and every common sight,
 To me did seem
 Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.”

WORDSWORTH, *Ode on Intimations of Immortality.*

THE CHILDREN OF LIGHT

CHAPTER I

THE CO-OPERATIVE CHILD

I

OUT of doors a sharp thunder-shower was stripping the blossoms off the young peach trees—their first blossoms, poor little things!—and in the room that used to be the dining-room of the old plantation house, where I sat absorbed in the *Autobiography of Robert Owen*, Uncle Llewellyn was kicking the printing press. Not maliciously; more in sorrow than in anger; a kick co-operative, attuned to the rest of our life at New Hope. And yet, as I look back upon that undoubtedly noisy hour, I hear again only the ecstatic silence of my own thoughts, my soaring, eleven-year-old, little girl thoughts, touched to fire by the pedagogic and commercial achievements of a remarkable little Welsh boy. It was not until I had got up and crossed the room, and Uncle Llewellyn had apparently, though quite inaudibly, said, “What?” that the noise came racketing about my ears and I found myself shouting—louder than the thunder, louder than the sweeping rain, louder even than the quarrelsome rasp and rattle and bang of the unwilling press:—

"Uncle Lew, when I and the colony are a little older how would you like to have me write our autobiography?"

It was horrible to hear my modest, tentative proposition go bawling and reverberating around the long low room. Uncle Lew, who was more than ordinarily observant, must have noticed how shocked and scarlet I was, for he stopped kicking long enough to say with his widest, most sympathetic smile:—

"I think it's a great idea, Clara; a great idea! Just the sort of idea I should expect to come out of that bright little red head of yours.—There, she's stuck again. Third time in forty minutes."

And I had to get him the oil-can and several tools.

"A great idea," he said over and over again at intervals as he screwed and tinkered at the now silent and rigid press. "A great idea."

"Of course, it couldn't be—it couldn't—for quite a while yet," I ventured presently, when the rain, too, had hushed and I could speak in my ordinary voice. "Quite a long, long time. Because the colony is still so—so—young."

"Yes," Uncle Llewellyn agreed. "I'd wait till it's cut its two-year-old teeth. The second summer is always a critical time for babies. But"—he paused to squint into the machinery, and when he spoke again the whimsical note had dropped out of his voice—"please God we'll bring this one safe through."

I wondered if he would like me to say Amen, but before I could make up my mind he had taken up his kindly refrain—"A great idea—a great idea for a little girl."

“And by that time I shall be able to set it up myself, every word, italics and punctuation and everything, perhaps. And you can print it, Uncle Lew.”

“Not on this press,” said he with decision, and he gave the thing an experimental kick. It slapped together unexpectedly, whereupon I returned discreetly to the adventures of Robert Owen. The May number of *The Message of New Hope* was already overdue ten days, and what Uncle Llewellyn was pleased to call my fanatical imagination, pictured our two hundred and three Northern subscribers as clamouring hungrily for the spiritual modicum of locusts and wild honey we of the wilderness had agreed to supply monthly, at the subscription rate of fifty cents for the year.

These two hundred and three Northern subscribers were much in my thoughts. I could say their names and addresses off by heart in alphabetical order, as glibly as I could say the list of prepositions or the English chronological tables; for I was the Subscription Department of *The Message of New Hope*, I addressed all the wrappers, and all the appeals, and stamped all the receipts with the rubber stamp. There were two kinds of subscribers, and my heart beat pitifully and anxiously for both. There were the ones who wrote Uncle Lew that going out of the world was not the way to convert the world, and no co-operative colony had ever justified itself, but they liked our spirit and they liked our paper, and they enclosed a cheque for — etc. These were usually college professors and settlement workers. And there were the others who said that

although they didn't know whether we were going at it the right way or not, they only wished they could take the risk and come and join us, but family claims, or health, etc. The majority of these were maiden ladies. Occasionally, subscribers who had come to one or another of the Southern health resorts to escape the Northern winter, would visit the colony for a day; but I found myself vaguely disappointed when I saw them face to face. They used a great many laudatory and discriminating adjectives about the colony, but they were invariably uneasy lest the train might not stop for them when we flagged it. And yet, I used to reproach myself; for the one who fidgeted most sent back a hot-water bottle and a grey blanket wrapper from the city for father, when father was dying. And another sent a barrel of books for the library; old books and theological. And all the subscribers had responded cheerily, even gallantly, to the appeals—for the steam wood-saw, and the shingle machine, and the cane-mill; and now they were trying to send us money enough to buy a new press, or at least a press new enough not to have to be kicked three thousand two hundred and sixty-seven times whenever we printed an edition of *The Message of New Hope*.

Would the subscribers buy my autobiography? I mused, leaning my chin on the upper edge of volume one of the *Life of Robert Owen* and gazing out of the window, across the wide gallery, to the dripping and ravaged peach trees. Perhaps by that time there would be more than two hundred and three subscribers. Perhaps by that time—oh, stupendous

thought!—the colony would no longer be an experiment. Perhaps the whole world would be the colony. And no one would be working for wages any more. And competition would be abolished.—

I became aware that the edge of the book was hurting my chin.—Yes; they would like, then, to know about the early days. And I would begin by saying that I was the child of co-operative parents. That would win the public at the start. Uncle Llewellyn considered the public very important, I knew. And I would tell how my father always laughed tenderly and said that my mother was even more of a crank than he was. But, of course, people would understand that neither my father nor my mother was really a crank. And I would tell,—no; not about the time before mother died, when I was little, and the capitalist press wouldn't print father's brilliant satires on Society, and mother had to work for wages. Some things were nobody's business, father used to say. And it was nobody's business about my ancestors, that they were competitive; everybody's ancestors were competitive, more or less; and if mine were rather more than less—still, it was not my fault.

No; I would begin with the day we came to New Hope; and how the big plantation house and its offices, and Mr. Baldwin's three-room house, and a two-room shack, were all the colony; but there were forty people in the population, most of them sleeping in tents. And how no one knew anything about father and me except that father said he was a Socialist and I was a Christian and he thought we could team it as Christian-Socialist with the rest

of them if they were willing. And how Uncle Llewellyn—who wasn't Uncle Llewellyn then, but Brother Evans—clapped his hand on father's shoulder and said—"You've come to the right place for that cough, brother." And Aunt Camilla, who was Sister Evans, said—"Everybody in the colony has a little boy or girl in her house except me, and I've been jealous, but now I'm going to have a little girl," and she kissed me. And how it was father who suggested *The Message of New Hope*, and was the first editor with Uncle Llewellyn to co-operate with him. And how three of father's brilliant satires on Society were published in the *Message*, but after that we had to stop them because some of the other brothers in the colony were very evangelical, and some of the Northern subscribers were unmarried ladies; and Uncle Llewellyn said we would have to educate our public first. But father died before the public was educated.

My throat contracted suddenly and I shoved back my chair and went to stand by the window with my hands clasped tight together. Anyway, I did not have to write about it now.

Several colonists were coming through the wet orchard to the plantation house. I heard Aunt Camilla unhitching the horse. She dropped the harness in a puddle and squealed. After a few minutes she came along the gallery with the mail-bag and stopped at the window to hand me the newspapers.

"Three days' mail on account of the wash-outs," she said, and hurried on around the gallery to the front room that used to be the old plantation-house

parlour and was now the post office, and the polls, and the auditorium, and, on rainy nights when they couldn't have their cots on the gallery, the bachelors' hotel.

"Any news?" asked Uncle Lew.

I glanced at the headlines of the uppermost newspaper and my eye was caught and held by a familiar name. I hesitated a moment before I answered, not very loud:—

"There's a millionaire dead."

"What?—Never mind, I can't hear. I'll be through this job in ten minutes now, if she holds out, and then if you're a real good little girl, Clara, you may distribute the type." He smiled quizzically at me and I smiled back over the top of the newspaper and hoped he could not see how red my face was.

I carried the papers to the table and shuffled them over. The death of the millionaire filled the front page of every one.

"Jesse Emery Dead at New York Residence after Illness of Ten Days."

"Multi-millionaire meets his End like a Man. Grieving Grandsons summoned from Sunny Italy arrive on Time." And there was a picture of the grandsons.

"Wall Street Mourns Death of Noted Financier. Funeral at Old Trinity. Eminent Bankers and Railroad Magnates are Pall-bearers."

"Old Copper King succumbs to Common Lot. Pneumonia claims One of America's Grand Old Men."

I had turned back to the picture of the grieving

grandsons—two very cheerful-looking little boys in white sailor-suits—whose names, it seemed, were Lucian and Cyrus, and was reading how they and their widowed mother—*née* Pauline Goddard, and only daughter of the late George Goddard, the eminent corporation lawyer—lived in a villa in the land of the olive and the vine, which, by putting two and two together, I concluded must be Sunny Italy—when Helen Baldwin spoke to me through the window.

I jumped and Helen laughed, and while she was laughing I did what was, for me, a very queer thing: I faced round and hoisted myself up on the table with a sudden spring so that I sat on the pile of newspapers. And I was not a little girl who ordinarily sat on tables. Even as I did it I wondered if Helen would notice; but although Helen was two years older than I and, every one said, a very clever little girl, some subtleties escaped her, though not many.

"How far have you got?" repeated Helen, still doubled over the window-sill with laughter.

"Got?" said I.

"Yes; in Robert. You know, it's my turn to-morrow."

Helen and I were reading *Robert Owen* turn and turn about, a day at a time; but this was my first day.

"Not very far," I answered, relieved.

"Talk about conceit!" said Helen.

"Oh, do you think so?" I asked anxiously.

"Think!"

"But he doesn't brag at all," I ventured. "You have to tell the truth in an autobiography; and if

he did teach school when he was nine years old, of course he had to put it in."

"Well, I don't believe he was so particularly truthful"—this with a cynical air.

"Oh, Helen!"

"There were the apple dumplings."

"I haven't come to them."

"Well, you've come to the flummerie?"

"Wasn't it dreadful? I could feel it scalding him all the way down, when I was reading."

"Nasty stuff!" said Helen.

"I know, you hate any kind of mush," I agreed sympathetically, "but he seemed to like it; and boiled flour may be nicer than corn meal."

"Pap!" said Helen, making an awful face. "Ogh! I'm glad it burnt him. And then he said it made him have to be careful all the rest of his life about what he ate. And then when he was a grown-up young man and his housekeeper would come in to ask him what he would have for dinner, he would say an apple dumpling, and anything else she pleased. Every single day an apple dumpling. I don't call that a weak stomach."

"But perhaps they're easy to digest," I suggested meekly.

"Dumplings!" shrieked Helen.

But I, too, was getting excited. "You shall not make him out so bad," I cried. "You are only doing it to argue, anyway; you know you are. And if he had been really untruthful he wouldn't have said anything about the apple dumplings at all. He didn't have to. It was his own autobiography."

"Then you think he wasn't a story-teller, he was just a fool?" Helen asked sweetly.

"You know he wasn't, Helen Baldwin; and besides, I never say that word about any one." Tears of rage sprang to my eyes.

"Now who's the prig?" laughed Helen.

"You only like to talk so as to get the better of people," I murmured. "You don't care about anything really at all."

She grinned teasingly at me through the window and then, on a sudden, her face clouded. It was a broad, rather chubby face, with a forehead wide but low, and an impudent, uptilting nose. The mouth was large, clean-lipped, and very red, a mocking mouth, and almost always merry. But for the eyes the face might have been shallow, even hard; they were a clear brown, those eyes, alert without being sharp; not eyes that flashed. It was Helen's mouth that flashed; the eyes were steady. Only two or three times in our life has the Helen of the eyes spoken out to me, but even when we were little girls and the every-day Helen had tormented me almost beyond endurance, I knew—as surely as I knew that Robert Owen was truthful—that the other Helen was there, as much in earnest about life as I was, and much more unselfish and helpful with her elders. I think she knew I knew it, and it exasperated her.

One thing I never did know, and that was how she would tease me next. Now, when the smile faded from the impish mouth, leaving it only scornful and aggressive, and sullen eyelids hid the eyes, I waited, braced for conflict.

"Well, there is one thing I don't care for," she

said with sulky deliberation, "and that's this colony."

The enormity of this statement was such that I had nothing to say.

"Mother says I may go up North and live with sister if I want to," she continued, when the silence had ceased to be impressive. "I could go to a high school for nothing, and begin to get ready to earn my own living. And maybe I'll go to college. Sister has written, and she has a splendid place on a newspaper now, and I wouldn't cost much, and we'd have a little flat——"

"Helen, Helen, you wouldn't do it!" I cried. "Just because we don't have anything but mush and cow-peas!"

"Mother says I may if I want to," she reiterated, tracing patterns on the window-sill.

"Well, your father won't," I retorted.

"Father believes like Tolstoy does, you know. He's a non-resistant. He can't say anything."

"He said a lot when Mr. Hobart 'most had the colony sold up for debt. It was your father that wanted to tar and feather him, and if it hadn't been for Uncle Lew——"

"That was because he was mad," said Helen; "and everybody was mad, and they had a right to be. That Mr. Hobart was nothing but a tramp when he came here, and he didn't do a lick of work all the three months he stayed. And then to try to sell us up so he could come in for an equal share of what was left—and it never was any of it his in the first place! He was a regular Judas.—But," she added calmly, "father won't resist mother."

"And you'll be a Judas, too, Helen Baldwin," I shouted, "a mean, selfish Judas——"

"Hoo, hoo, hoo!" called Uncle Llewellyn. "Is that the voice of wrath I hear?" He had just stopped the press.

The voice of wrath was abruptly hushed. I glared at Helen and Helen wrinkled her nose at me. Aunt Camilla came into the room with letters in her hands.

"Haven't you gone home yet with that mail, Helen?" she remarked.

And Helen said—"No'm," and went.

I slid off the table and was turning again to the grieving grandsons when I saw Aunt Camilla silently lay three letters on the press before Uncle Llewellyn. His eyes went from one to another of the letters and then sought the eyes of Aunt Camilla. His eyebrows went up the least bit, interrogatively; her face remained impassive, non-committal. Evidently I was not needed at this crisis. I picked up the top newspaper and went, as unostentatiously as I could, across the room to the gallery door; but as I turned the knob Uncle Llewellyn said:—

"You needn't run away, Clara. There's a letter for you here."

II

As I came back, Uncle Llewellyn slit one of the letters and began to read it, and he had scarcely begun when his eyes and his mouth opened quite wide simultaneously.

"Emery!" he ejaculated. "Why, of course!"

And then—"Why, Clara!" and he stared at me, his face one round O of amazement. And I stood shrinking before him, the unhappy red creeping up over neck and cheek and forehead. It had not occurred to me that the letters could be about—that.

He put out his hand and drew me to him, and I could feel that he was trying to keep the excitement out of his kind voice:—

"Didn't you say something about a dead millionaire a while back, Clara?"

I nodded miserably.

"Well, do you know who he was?"

Uncle Lew's question was purely rhetorical, but I was too mortified to appreciate the fine distinctions of language.

"Yes," I said, very low; and Aunt Camilla bent down to hear. "Yes; he was my great-uncle."

"You knew!"—Uncle Llewellyn held me away from him and gaped at me. "You knew!"—This seemed to amaze him even more than the letter.

Aunt Camilla had snatched that up and was reading it breathlessly. "Old Jesse Emery!" she cried. "That man!—Why, Clara! Why have you never told us?"

I hung my head. I hid my face in my two hands. Uncle Lew patted me gently.

"I was so ashamed of him," I whispered.

Aunt Camilla was excitable and not very strong; she gave a queer sort of explosive screech and began to cry and laugh, both together, violently. Uncle Lew shook her and remonstrated with her, and said:—

"Camilla, Camilla, you mustn't! Brace up!—You're making her cry!—Camilla!"

And after I had brought her a glass of water salted with my tears she quieted down, except for an occasional hiccough, and made me sit in her lap and be loved and comforted while Uncle Llewellyn read one of the other letters through slowly, murmuring, "My, my, my!" under his breath as he read. When he had finished he took up the third letter and put it into my hands.

"This is to you," he said. It was edged with black.

I was feeling happier with Aunt Camilla's arm around me; and besides, although I was eleven years old, this was the first letter I had ever received. It was fat, and the handwriting was a woman's. On the back there was a blob of black sealing-wax sealed with a monogram. Uncle Llewellyn handed me his penknife to slit the envelope. I took it with a rising sense of importance. After all, perhaps a great-uncle need not be considered such a very near relation.

"I suppose they are inviting me to the funeral," I remarked. "It is very polite of them, but I don't believe they really expect me to come; and I can't, anyway, because I haven't enough money for the railroad fare."

The queerest look passed over Uncle Llewellyn's face. "The funeral is over by now," he said. "The papers are late on account of the wash-outs, you know, and these two letters are later because they were first sent to Judge Acton over in Mobile. He expected to come himself, but he's laid up. This is what he says—I think I might as well read the letter," he looked a question at Aunt Camilla—

" This is what he says—you'll have to keep these letters carefully, Clara,—he says:—

" ' DEAR EVANS,—You New Hoppers do keep me jumping, I must say. My latest information concerning your colony comes to me from my old friend Daniel Packard, senior member of the law firm of Packard and Estabrook, New York. It seems that the pretty little red-headed girl I took such a shine to the last time I came out to see you about that scamp Hobart, is some punkins. I remember you talked to me about her future with a good deal of anxiety when we were facing the imminent possibility of the colony's going bust. But there's no need to lie awake nights over her; she is the grand-niece of the multi-millionaire, Jesse Emery. The old gentleman only found out her whereabouts a few days before he died. She is Cyrus Emery's grand-daughter. Cyrus died in the civil war. Strict legal etiquette would demand that I bring you the news in person, but I broke my leg last Saturday off in the swamp, shooting ducks, and as I feel fairly certain that you won't kidnap the young lady before I can get round on crutches to make my formal call, I am forwarding a couple of letters that ought not to be delayed.

" ' As for the affair of the receivership—I have your good letter of the 30th, but you didn't need to thank me, it was a perfectly plain case. Hobart hadn't a leg to stand on. I only wish I could feel I had done something more than merely postpone the evil day, for you all certainly are the most endearing set of cranks that ever invented a Utopia.

But I'm afraid it's got to come, unless you can get somebody to back you up and lift that mortgage. However, this is *ex officio*—you know your own business best.—Faithfully yours,

‘EDWARD CARTER ACTON.

“ ‘P.S.—Of course, you understand that if anything did happen to that child they could make it mighty hot for you and me.’ ”

“ ‘Happen to me?’ ” said I, but Aunt Camilla interrupted to ask if I had ever seen my great-uncle.

No. But there were pictures of him in every paper, and of the two little boys, his grandsons, and their mother. I handed over the paper.

“ ‘She was actually reading all about it without saying a word,’ ” said Aunt Camilla. “ ‘Why, Clara! Didn't you mean to tell us anything?’ ”

“ ‘No,’ ” said I, wretched but firm.

“ ‘I shouldn't wonder if her letter were from some of them,’ ” suggested Uncle Lew. “ ‘This other, to me, is from the lawyers, a business letter, important, but I shall have to explain it to you, Clara;—better read what your family have to say first.’ ”

Family!—I looked at him.

“ ‘Slip the blade under, this way—so. No; you must do it; I can't open your letter.’ ”

The fat, black-edged envelope contained several letters, and Uncle Lew picked out the one written by the hand that had addressed the envelope. I had a good deal of trouble reading the gigantic, see-saw writing, but I discovered that it was written by a grown person who signed herself my Cousin Pauline, and who was a good deal perturbed by the

fact that I had been living alone among strangers for six months.

"Strangers!" said I, clutching Aunt Camilla.

"But now," said the letter, "you must come at once. If there is no one to bring you we will send for you."

I looked at Uncle Llewellyn uneasily. "How shall we explain that I can't come?" I asked.

"She sounds like a really sweet woman," said Aunt Camilla in a tone of relief.

"Yes," agreed Uncle Llewellyn, "and considering that they are her sons, she might—you know——"

Aunt Camilla seemed to understand.

"How shall we explain—" I began again.

"Ho, ho! look at this!" Uncle Lew interrupted. The second letter had a Kate Greenaway boy and girl in blue and green skipping across the top of the page. The handwriting was conscientious but wobbly.

"My dear cousin," it began, "Mother says you are our cousin and you are going to live with us now."

"No!" said I, and the little letter shook in my hands.

"We are going," prompted Uncle Llewellyn.

"We are going," I continued, "up to the montagnes. Grandfather said we have lived long enough in Europe. Mother says you and I must like each other because I am named Cyrus for your grandfather. It is an old family name. It is also the name of a great king, but he was a heathen. It is not as bad as to be named Nebbuchuddnezzzar. Lucian has the intention to be creamated, but I have not. I do not wish to ressemble to grand-

father in that way.—Je te souhaite le bonheur, my
cousine. Toujours à toi, CYRUS EMERY."

"All of a sudden it doesn't mean anything," said I.

Uncle Llewellyn laughed, and explained that it was French. He and Aunt Camilla together translated it, rather lamely, and before they had finished the big plantation bell rang for supper, and we read the third letter in a hurry. It left us gasping.

"To Clara our beloved cousin at New Hope, greeting," it began.

"Dearest sister in Christ Jesus, I am so glad your name is Clara because it fits in exactly with the new play Cyrus and I are playing since seven months. It is a play, but also it is a realism, for we shall become it when we are grown up. I am longing to explain it to you now, but I will keep it till you come. Her name was Clara; *i fioretti*; now can you guess? I am sure yes. The difficulty is to find lepers. Mother says there are no wolves in the mountains, but grandfather told me there are sometimes bears, and those perhaps we can make our little brothers. We shall have a beautiful summer.

"I, Brother Lucian, with the will to kiss your feet, do beseech you come quickly.

"P.S.—I did not make up the beginning and end. They used to write that way in those days, you know."

Never had I heard Uncle Llewellyn laugh so loud and so long.

"What under the canopy!" exclaimed Aunt Camilla. "His mother never read it, that's certain."

"It sounds like an acrostic," said I.

Uncle Lew bent back my head and looked into my face quizzically. "They're cousins of yours, all right, Clara," he said. "I can detect a strong family likeness."

III

The light was dim and hazy in our new co-operative dining-room. The six bracket-lamps made their appeal primarily to the sense of smell. Moreover, the kitchen chimney had been built by Brother Barton, who earned his living, when he worked for wages, by regulating the pitch of organ pipes; and it would seem that the draught in an organ pipe and the draught in a chimney are not governed by the same law of physics, for Brother Barton's sensitive ear had not enabled him to make our kitchen chimney draw. He, however, had a strong feeling that the fault lay in the swing-door between the kitchen and the dining-room. Helen's father, who had occupied the chair of homiletics in a western theological seminary before he became a non-resistant, had adjusted this door to swing; and it swung, when once set going, as faithfully as the pendulum of an eight-day clock. At first, some of us thought that Helen's father had stumbled upon the secret of perpetual motion. But he hadn't, quite.

The door was swinging now, as Uncle Llewellyn and Aunt Camilla and I came into the dining-room. And Sister Hetty Pugh was frying corn meal batter-cakes in the kitchen. And our three co-operative invalids and Grandfather Pugh, who was eighty-seven, were coughing. And all the other members

of the colony, of whom there were at that time fifty-two, including fourteen children, were wiping their eyes or drinking water. Helen, armed with the water pitcher, was refilling tumblers. As I look back, Helen is always doing some commonplace, helpful thing, in those days—as now—and scorning herself for doing it.

"This is the third time I've filled them," she grumbled. "Ask Uncle Lew to ask mother if I can come over after supper and help wrap the *Message*. Something exciting!—I am—you know what!—A letter from sister."

I nodded soberly, and Uncle Lew, who had heard, gave me a curious look, as if he found me interesting.

"What is it?" I asked him, slipping into my chair.

He pushed me up to the table and sat down beside me. "I was wondering how much of your news we should have known if your family had not written," he said, smiling, and watching me.

I met his eyes helplessly but said nothing. What was there to say? And just then Sister Pugh created a diversion by bursting through the smoke with a platter of fresh cakes.

"These are the last," she proclaimed.

"Kingdom come!" thundered Grandfather Pugh. "Were you making that infernal smoke? If I had known"—he choked, gasped. His daughter set down the platter hastily, and led him coughing and gesticulating from the dining-room.

"And they're made without either sour milk or eggs," she called back in a tone of triumph.

"No need to tell us that," murmured Brother Nicholas Richards, who sat at my left hand.

Brother Richards was one of our young bachelors; so young, indeed, that Helen, whose bump of veneration was small, always spoke of him to me as Nicholas. He had studied architecture in Paris, and when he joined the colony he felt that New Hope was his architectural opportunity. He had visions of a city which should set the standard for municipal architecture for all time. When he talked about it I used to be reminded of the city in the Apocalypse, except that his specifications and measurements were less definite than those of St. John. But although he had been with us since October, and this was almost June, the city was not built. And now he was going away. He said the new co-operative dining-room was more than he could bear—architecturally. I was sorry to have him go. It seemed as if he ought to wait at least a year.

The really heart-breaking thing about life at New Hope, to me at the age of eleven, was not that we often did not have enough to eat, not that we were short of blankets—always I have been callous in regard to people who did not have food or clothes; it is one of my limitations, I know—but that any one should come to us enthusiastic and expectant, and go away in dejection or contempt. And this so often happened. Could there be anything wrong with co-operation? I used to wonder, fearfully. But Uncle Lew was very consoling on this point: he said the trouble was with human nature—his human nature and Mr. Hobart's and everybody's. It always seemed to me very noble of Uncle Lew to put his

human nature in the same class with Mr. Hobart's; and it seems so still. Concerning the defection of Brother Richards, Uncle Lew was also consoling. He said it was just as well. He said that Brother Richards would have to build a few Biltmores, and marble sky-scrapers, and trust companies, in order to be able to appreciate the possibilities of a plain pine board and glorify the outlines of a packing-box. It was Brother Richards himself who called our new co-operative dining-room a packing-box.

He helped me to the last two cakes on the platter.

"One, please," said I politely.

"It's all right," he reassured me. "The rest of us had gorged ourselves before you came in. We had as many as three apiece."

Uncle Llewellyn had had none. I looked up at him and lifted a cake tentatively, but he said—"Don't you dare!"

He was eating cornbread without butter, and dried peaches. As soon as we could pay the lawyer for defending us against Mr. Hobart we were going to have meat again, occasionally, and butter, sometimes. Eleven people had gone away from the colony since Mr. Hobart tried to betray us. Still, it was not all his fault. The climate was pleasanter in winter than in summer.

Grandfather Pugh came back to his seat, glared at the empty platter and attacked his dried peaches resentfully with a three-pronged fork. The old gentleman was a member of three peace societies, one of them international, but his attitude toward the minor exigencies of life was distinctly militant. It was he who suggested to Helen's father that Mr.

Hobart be tarred and feathered. He was the only member of the colony who ever said damn; I mean, of course, in my hearing.

Warned by the lull that inevitably preceded the pushing back of chairs, I was hastily spooning up my last mouthful of peaches, when Helen's father arrested our attention by knocking on his table. Helen's father always read the notices to the colony. He was a little man, mild-eyed, be-spectacled, meagre, but his voice—he was wont to refer to it as his organ, as if he were unicellular—would have filled St. Peter's easily. At least, so Brother Richards said, who had been there. Brother Richards and Helen's father did not get on very well together. Brother Richards always spoke of him as the organic hole. But Helen's father was very much in earnest about the colony.

"My first notice," he trumpeted now, through the odorous haze, "will give us all encouragement. I have a letter from some one in Maine, who signs herself 'A Friend'—I say 'herself' advisedly—and sends us two dollars towards the interest on our mortgage."

Aunt Camilla drank water hastily, and choked.

"Our next news is not so happy." Helen's father paused.

Uncle Lew looked up at him quickly; looked interrogatively across me at Brother Richards, who lifted his eyebrows and shook his head in token of ignorance.

"Not so happy. But we must remember in whose hands we are. Our dear Brother Ashley, whose merry face we have missed at table these two

days past, is very ill with a fever. We don't know what fever; we hope not typhoid——"

"Glory, what an idiot!" muttered Brother Richards.

Uncle Lew—one hand grasping the table, his chair hanging backward on its hind legs—was trying to reach Helen's father with a suppressive eye. But Helen's father was near-sighted; he went on booming through the sickish silence that had fallen upon the dining-room.

"We hope not, but until we know, we think it best that no one should drink water that has not been boiled. I do not need to ask those who believe in prayer to pray for our dear brother. And now, shall we follow our usual custom and speed the parting guest? Brother Richards, whose blithe spirit——"

"Forgive me, Shelley!" whispered Brother Richards.

"Has done so much to cheer our winter, is to leave us to-morrow to carry the leaven of co-operation into the great world of competition——"

"Nixie; competition for ever!" said Brother Richards under his breath.

"Shall we drink our usual toast——"

"Hold on, Dr. Baldwin!" Brother Richards had sprung to his feet. "Has this water been boiled?"—Tumblers were hastily set down. "And besides, I'm sorry, but I can't leave you to-morrow; the cheque I expected to-night didn't come."

Everybody laughed, but in a shaky sort of way, quickly smothered in the raucous scrape of chairs.

Outside the door there was not the usual linger-

ing and chatter. Here and there irresolute people stood about, as if they wanted to say something but were not sure it would be wise. One or two made a motion to detain Uncle Lew, but he went straight away, through the dusky orchard, with Aunt Camilla at his elbow and me at his heels.

"Did you know about this, Lew?" asked Aunt Camilla.

"Do you think he would have given that notice if I had?"

"Great thing, initiative," Brother Richards observed. He had caught up with us, and Helen came panting behind him.

"I can stay till eight," she volunteered. "Why didn't you wait for me?"

"Oh, Nick, is that you?" said Uncle Lew. "You're the one I want to see. Do you go to Boston, or only to New York? Would you be willing to go a bit farther—say New Hampshire—if I could make it worth your while? Perhaps New York will do. It depends. I may need some one to take—Children, you can run ahead and light the big lamp if you'll be very careful. Helen do the lighting while Clara holds the chimney."

"I *am* going!" whispered Helen excitedly, as we began to run. "Especially now there's typhoid fever."

We ran on silently, stumbling sometimes in the rough orchard grass.—Typhoid!—Perhaps now that I had cousins Uncle Lew would find a way to send me to them for fear of the fever. Behind us Brother Richards shouted suddenly—"Not those Emerys?—Why, I met—" and then his voice fell.—But there

was no money, fortunately.—Unless—the words of Judge Acton's letter seemed to rush into my heart—"There's no need to lie awake nights over her; she is the grand-niece of the multi-millionaire, Jesse Emery." The whole situation was suddenly illumined by a frightful light.—But I would not go.

And now another astonishing thing happened. Helen flung her arm around my neck and kissed me. It was an inopportune moment for affection; we were going up the gallery steps, and we lost our balance and fell up them and over each other and bumped our knees.

"I will make a list of the things I do, so you can do them. Somebody must. Grandfather Pugh has to have a cup of hot milk and water every day at eleven—don't forget;—mostly water unless the cows give more. And I wash Mrs. Hardy's dishes for her every morning—and—I'll write them down. Oh, I am going!" she cried in an angry, defiant voice. "Where are the matches? Where is the lamp?—Clara, you must never forget about drinking the boiled water."

IV

Whenever I hear frogs croaking at night my throat closes and I know again the anguish of driven helplessness that tortured me in that soft southern evening as I sat close beside Uncle Lew on the plantation-house steps. I feel again the jasmine-scented darkness and Uncle Lew's arm around me pressing me against his side. I hear the hum of a foraging mosquito and the loud, cracked chorus

of wakeful frogs; not literary hylas rhythmically poetising in the trees, but frogs, the practical citizens of the swamp in noisy caucus, choosing *Patrick, Patrick, Patrick, Patrick, Patrick*, by direct primary, for some municipal office, with an occasional booming note for *Paul*. In the goldfish pond of our villa in Umbria the frogs are osculatory. They make long, kissing sounds, like the drawing of a cow's heel out of the mud, such as one would expect from sentimental Italian batrachians; but in America, in the South, on summer nights, they say *Patrick, Patrick, Patrick*, patiently, incessantly, without excitement, in a persistent monotone.

Helen had run home across the orchard, and Aunt Camilla had gone with Nicholas to see the sick man. The *Messages* were in the mail-bag ready for the morning train.

"Uncle Lew," said I, presently, "what did Judge Acton mean when he said you needn't lie awake nights over me?"

Uncle Lew grunted, and it was then that he put his arm around me. "Trust you for coming straight to the point," he said.

I waited.

"Well, you see, Clara," he began at last, "it's this way: your great-uncle was a very rich man, and he's left you some of his money."

"Enough to lift the mortgage?" I asked.

"Bless her heart!" said he gently, with his little amused chuckle. "Yes; and something over."

"Then we can use the rest for the printing press."

"My child," said Uncle Lew, "it is evident that what you need is complete change of scene."

"I will drink boiled water, Uncle Lew."

He gave a little groan, such a sad sound. "I was not thinking of your stomach just then, Clara, I was thinking of your dear little soul."

"But my soul can't take typhoid fever."

"There are other germs."

We sat a few minutes in silence. I was trying to find a polite method of asserting my independence. When I did speak I trembled in a way that was very unpleasant to me:—

"If it is my money, I can spend it as I please, and I do not want to use it for a long journey. I am going to lift the mortgage and buy the printing press."

"The peculiar thing about it is that although it is your money, my dear, you cannot spend it as you choose," remarked Uncle Lew.

"Then I won't take it." I felt distinct relief.

"And another peculiar thing about it is that you can't refuse it. You are what is called in law a minor—that is, you are not twenty-one years old—and you must do what your family think is best for you."

"Father was my family, and he is dead, and I have adopted you and Aunt Camilla," I cried.

To this he made no reply; and the frogs said—"Patrick, Patrick."

It is impossible to put into words a child's desperate first consciousness of impotence. All those frantic emotions that betrayal, desertion, fetters, generate, vapoured dumb and nameless in my sick and terrified little soul.

"Patrick, Patrick, Patrick," chanted the frogs.

I did not move head, nor hand, nor foot.

"Poor young one!" said Uncle Lew at last.
"Poor young one!"

"I must stay!" I whispered to him then. I could not speak out loud; something was smothering me. "I must stay, to write the autobiography of the colony."

"I will send you the *Message*, dearie; you shall know what we are doing."

"But you expurgate the *Message*."

He sighed.

"I must stay."

Uncle Lew had a happy thought—"You shall come back some day—if—if we are here."

I began to cry then. "I shall be so old," I sobbed, with my head on my knees. "I shall be twice as old as I am now."

"I was older than that before I got my chance to live my dream," said Uncle Lew.

I lifted my head. "Is the colony your dream, Uncle Lew?"

He looked out into the darkness, musingly. "I do not know," he said.

Suddenly I clinched my little helpless hands and flung them, rigid, above my head. "I will not compete!" I cried. "It is wicked to compete. Father said so. You say so. So does Robert Owen. I will not! I will not! I will not!—no one shall make me. Even if everybody else does, I never will. I will co-operate by myself for ever and ever."

CHAPTER II

A FRANCISCAN REVIVAL

I

It was Lucian who welcomed me to the farm. He said something ecstatic in a strange tongue, and leaning toward me in a tiptoe sort of way he kissed me daintily on each cheek. If he had kissed my feet, as his letter declared he "had the will" to do, I could not have been more astonished. Then, still bubbling unintelligible words, he took my hand in one of his and with the other touched my hair.

"English, Lucian," said my Cousin Pauline. "You know grandfather wished it."

"Before he died, yes," the boy answered swiftly, "but do you not think he is by this time more *cosmopolite*? I must greet her in the French that San Francisco loved."

"She does not understand French," said a shy, dry, meditative little voice, and I saw Cyrus, a spindly, pale child with freckles on his nose and wisps of sandy hair that strayed untidily down his forehead. He was staring at me fixedly, out of a pair of round, milky blue eyes.

"No?" said Lucian. He spoke to me, but I could only make a little negative motion of the head and turn a more embarrassed crimson.

"Nor Italian?"

My Cousin Pauline had drawn me to her and was kissing me, also on each cheek, and saying something in English, I do not know what. Lucian still held my hand, and as his mother kissed me he said:—

“If you were quite dumb you would still look like the Pintorricchio madonna at Spello—those pale slim features; the one who says, ‘My son, wherefore?’ to Gesulino when she loses him in the temple. But your hair is brighter.” Again he put out his hand and touched it.

“San Francesco cut off her hair,” observed Cyrus.

My Cousin Pauline gave a queer little cry that I afterwards learned to recognise as “Dio mio!”

“My little darlings,” she added, drawing us all three into her arms, “you must learn what I am always telling you, that to-day we live the life of San Francesco, but in our spirits. We do not wear a hair shirt and beg at a church door, those things are past, for us. But in our spirits we follow San Francesco. Lucian understands.”

Lucian was regarding his mother thoughtfully. He made no reply.

“But I do not,” said Cyrus. His tone was calm.

A little frown wrinkled his mother’s forehead. “You understand that you are not to cut Clara’s hair,” she exclaimed impatiently.

“Oh, yes,” said Cyrus, drawing away from her.

I stood looking from one to another, as bewildered by their English as I had been by their French and Italian. What were they talking about? Who was San Francesco? Why did he cut her hair? Whose hair? And what was a Pintorricchio madonna? I, who had lived always among social

radicals and Methodist communists, had never heard the word madonna.

Still with her arm around me, the children's mother spoke over my shoulder to the kind young woman who had met me in New York and taken me away from Nicholas and Helen. Her tone startled me; it was a tone apart. What was the matter with it? Was it unkind?—No; the young woman, whose name was Antoinette, beamed gratefully. In the colony there were no servants, and when my mother was alive she was my father's servant and mine. I had never heard a lady speak to her maid.

"We play they are the Apennines, Cyrus and I," Lucian was saying, "we play the high one is Monte Nerone. I will show you. Come!" He was pulling me by the hand, but I remained transfixed, gazing at my Cousin Pauline, listening to that alien, unexplainable tone in her voice.

"Why are you frightened?" asked Cyrus.

"Come!" said Lucian, "while the sky is rosy. Come!" and he drew me around a corner of the broad piazza.

The low ridge on which the house was built dipped steeply westward, a bubble of green lawn, into a girdle of tree-tops; and below these lay the bright level meadows of the intervale, stretching out to the foot-hills of the mountains that watched over our valley.

"Do you see it between the trees?" Lucian was saying. "We play it is our Tiber, but it is bigger than the Tiber in Umbria; as big as it is at Rome. And in Umbria the trees on its banks are poplar trees, tall and quivery."

"But its real name is the Andrew Scoggin," added Cyrus.

Always, when I am away from our New Hampshire valley, I see it as it was on that first unforgettable evening, with the purple bloom of the sunset on its mountain tops, the pulsing flush of the sunset in its wide sky, in the elusive gleam of its river. And always my Cousin Lucian is in the picture, slender, bright-haired, with those long eyes like his mother's, only bluer, that firm chin running straight to the clean-cut masculine angle of his jaw, and the beautiful boy's mouth, smiling.

"It is not really like our villa," he said softly. "There are no vineyards, and a great many more woods. This is why San Francesco would love it—for the woods and the wild places in the rocks. But he would like to have Perugia over there, on that hill.—I would like to have Perugia over there."

He dropped my hand and walked away from me to the end of the piazza and stood there with his back to me.

"At night, when it is dark, and the fireflies dance, it is easier to pretend," said Cyrus. "I do not pretend very well."

II

It was the next morning, in a climbing beech wood, that Lucian told me the story of St. Francis and we found our common language.

We sat in a little huddle, knees under chin, at the bottom of a crack in a great cleft boulder. Polypody ferns tapestried the sides of our little cell, and

overhead there was a translucent pattern of beech leaves against a blue sky. Lucian wore my old grey blanket wrapper, that used to be father's. He had pounced upon it when I was endeavouring to co-operate with Antoinette in my unpacking.

"A cassock! A cassock!" he cried, slipping into it and pulling the hood over his head. "And here's a darn, and here's a patch. It's perfect!"

But at this point Antoinette became voluble and we were all three turned out of the room, though not without protest and somewhat undignified resistance from me.

"I must help her. They are my clothes. I always help," I explained, rattling the door-knob.

"But why? It's what she's for. What would she do if she didn't attend to our clothes?" asked Lucian.

"She's paid to. She's a servant," said Cyrus.

"I will never let anybody work for me for wages," I declared. "I will co-operate."

"Co-operate!" said Cyrus; "what a funny word!"

"It is no funnier than Pintorricchio," said I.

"It means to work with other people," remarked Lucian. "It is in an English book of mamma's that she did not finish. I began it because it had a pretty name—Fabian; but I had to look up too many words. You might as well stop turning the knob, Clara; Antoinette has locked the door."

So I let them take me up into the beech wood, and when we found the cleft boulder it was I who hung by my hands over the edge and showed them how to drop in.

"This is the independence of being in America,

that we go out by ourselves and Candeloro does not follow. And we leave the path," said Lucian. He was tying knots in the cord of my blanket wrapper. "Cyrus, do you remember when we made the pilgrimage to La Verna, there were rocks like this?"

Cyrus nodded.

"I feel exactly like San Francesco in this cassock. One, two, three—poverty, chastity, obedience." He counted the knots.

It was then that I asked who San Francesco was.

A queer, polyglot little version of the story did Lucian pour out to me. He began in rapid Italian, then pulled himself up and stared perplexedly.

"Some thoughts think themselves in English, others in French, others in Italian," he said. "How to speak my always Italian thoughts of San Francesco in English words? There is a very nice man at Assisi who is writing the life in French, mamma has met him; but it is not finished yet. Wait!—I will transform my thinking. I will tell you."

A merchant's son, this San Francesco, I gathered. "Rich, gay, a poet—like me," said Lucian. A soldier also. Cyrus and I hearkened to a description of the battle of Perugia which I have since sought in vain in the historic accounts of that event.—But a man of tenderness, *simpatico, molto!* Also of a somewhat feeble constitution, like Cyrus, for he had an illness. And when he was getting well he became *serio, molto serio*.

"It is like that," explained Cyrus. "One has *i pensieri sollenni*, I mean the solemn thoughts."

And it seemed that always, even when he was careless, San Francesco had an interest in beggars.

He wished to know how it felt to be a beggar. He begged one whole day on the steps of *San Piètro a Roma* to know how.

"Ah, you begin to like him! You listen!" cried Lucian, and he hurried on to the story of *la messa* and *l'evangelo*, my mind leaping now with his, stumbling over the strange names but reaching the heart of the story in the familiar words—"Take neither staff nor scrip, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves."

And then that cruel father! Lucian arose in the green cleft and tore off the cassock and cast it from him. "Henceforth, God is my father!" he cried. "Now, Cyrus, you are the bishop."

And Cyrus, picking up the cassock, wrapped it around his brother's shoulders and signed him with the cross. This was the first time I had ever seen any one make that sign. I did not know what Cyrus was doing.

And Brother Francesco built churches with his own hands.—I thought of the co-operative architecture at New Hope.—And he made a little feast for those wicked robbers.—Uncle Lew's treatment of Brother Hobart seemed to me a worthy parallel.

"And when we are big we also are coming to him like that excellent Fra Bernardo of Quintavalle, and we shall give to the poor—everything!"

"Mamma does not," said Cyrus.

"It is our money; she told me that," explained his brother.

"She lives poor in her spirit. She understands how she does it," Cyrus remarked, somewhat doubtfully.

"Mamma is very *mystique*," said Lucian. "San Francesco also is *mystique*, but he is *pratique* as well. I am like that."

"And there is always the difference that mamma is a woman," Cyrus acquiesced. "Some things the woman must have—like tea at five o'clock. She cannot be hungry like a man."

"Yes, she can!" I cried. "I have been co-operatively hungry, often. In New Hope the women are equal with the men. We have nothing for ourselves, but everything for each other, like your San Francesco. And we say brother and sister. And we beg. We don't like to, but we have to. And people send us old clothes, and money for the printing press. And Judge Acton sent us a ton of coal once from a mine of his in Birmingham. And we distribute to each according to his need. We live exactly like Jesus Christ and His disciples."

"Do you mean grown-up men and women?" exclaimed Lucian. "Not just children playing?"

Both boys were staring at me with amazed eyes over their doubled-up knees. We sat, of necessity, very close together.

"Wasn't father grown up?" I demanded. "And he hadn't a red cent. He told me so. But it didn't make any difference in the colony. And Uncle Lew put in all his money—a thousand dollars; but father and even tramps that stayed a week or two, had just as much to eat or to wear as Uncle Lew."

"Then it is real!" said Lucian. "Real!"

"Wasn't San Francesco real?" I asked, with sudden suspicion. "Is it only a story?"

"Oh, yes!" Lucian reassured me. "But then

some things are real, like the angels singing *Gloria in Excelsis* at Natale, and the Judgment Day with everybody climbing out of his tomb in the Campo Santo at Pisa, and demons leading you by the ear. And other things are real, like—*ebbene*—like our going to bed at eight—it does happen, don't you see? In one way everything is real if you are *mystique*."

I wanted to ask the meaning of this word, but Cyrus intervened with—"Tell us more!" And they both hitched an inch closer to me and waited, intent.

"It was Uncle Llewellyn who started it," I began. "He had a store, and he was trying to make an honest living; but he got soured on competition."

My cousins wrinkled their foreheads.

"All socialists are soured on competition," I explained. "If you compete it is a fight to see who gets the most. You buy as cheap as you can, and then you sell as dear as you can. You do, or you are done, Uncle Lew says."

"Dio mio!" sighed Lucian. "Is it English?"

I considered. An illustration used effectively by Helen's father in our co-operative Sunday School occurred to me.

"In the Bible it says if a man wants your coat, give it to him, doesn't it?"

"Also your cloak," added Cyrus. "I have learned that verse once."

"But in business if a man wants your coat you sell it to him for three times what you paid for it, and you don't tell him it is last year's style."

"I see!" shouted Lucian. "And San Francesco also made his father angry because he gave away the rich cloths that were to sell, I see!"

“And Uncle Llewellyn decided to try if the Bible would really work. And some other men and women wanted to try too.—Helen’s father—she is my great friend; and Grandfather Pugh because war is wicked; and a great many different kinds of people who were not Christian at all, some of them, but they were tired of competing. Brother Barton was a communist; he thought we ought to have everything in common, even our clothes when they came from the wash. But Brother Nash thought only the land—and Brother Peterson the land with the houses on it. And Nicholas had learned to be an architect in Paris and he had a French way of looking at it, and he had a red cap and a red neck-tie; and he sang the *Marseillaise* when he was planing boards. And Helen’s father followed Tolstoy.”

“Ah, Tolstoy!” said Lucian. “I read some of him, but mamma did not approve, although she is a disciple. And he also is like San Francesco, working with peasants. Yes, yes!”

“And the only thing they had to do, to belong to the colony, was to co-operate. Anybody could belong. Nicholas said it was a premium for dead beats, but he is not really a Christian; and the dead beats always went away after a while because they had to work. Perhaps you will see Nicholas, he said he had met your mother in Paris, and he knows a teacher who lives here in these mountains.”

“Dead beats?” mused Cyrus.

“Never mind,” his brother said; “we do not need to know every word, if we have the *ensemble*.”

“And they put together what they had, and bought

some land with an old tumble-down plantation house on it. But they had to have a mortgage on it too."

"I think I must be told what is a mortgage," pleaded Cyrus.

I pondered. What was a mortgage?

"You don't see it. It is invisible. But it makes you pay money every few months or else you can't have the land any more."

"A demon?" Cyrus suggested.

"No; something to do with business. You lift it, somehow, by paying. When I am twenty-one I am going back to the colony, and I am going to lift the mortgage, and buy a new printing press and live there. And if I have any money left over I will use it for drainage."

"I thought you were going to live with us," said Cyrus.

"No!" I backed away from them defiantly.

"We will live there, also!" said Lucian excitedly. "We will give away all our goods to feed the poor, and we will wear three cassocks and sandals and we will walk there all the way; and it will be the vintage time, and we will help to gather the grapes, and they will give us bread to eat, and we will sleep out of doors until we arrive at the New Hope. And your Uncle Lew will come out to meet us like San Domenico who greets San Francesco in the piazza of Santa Maria Novella in Florence."

"And mamma?" Cyrus suggested.

"Mamma will be interested in something else."

But I remembered all the people who had gone away from New Hope.

"You might not like it," I warned. "Helen

doesn't. We eat the same thing almost every day. Some people think we ought not to allow dancing; and some people don't like having a sermon and prayers on Sunday. And there was one man who wanted to have even husbands and wives in common. He and father were the two only real socialists in the colony, and he tried to say father must believe the way he did about husbands and wives. And father kicked him off the piazza. And the next day we found that he and Brother Barton's wife had gone away together on the midnight train. And his own wife, only she wasn't really his wife—nobody was his wife—was left behind with us. And some people left after that because they thought she wasn't respectable."

"The easiest way is not to marry at all, like San Francesco," said Lucian. "Then you do not grieve any one."

"San Francesco married Madonna Povertà," Cyrus corrected.

"But she was not real."

"And then you say everything is real." Cyrus's tone was patient.

"I said if you are *mystique*. But you are not *mystique*. To San Francesco she was real, and to me. She is my bride also."

I was about to make a remark about respectability, but I remembered that San Francesco was dead, and one could marry widows. Then Cyrus said:—

"I am glad; because that leaves Clara for me."

There was a startled flash in Lucian's blue eyes;

he opened his lips to speak, but shut them again as quickly. The two brothers looked at each other, saying nothing; the little brother with his sandy, straggling hair, and pale, intent eyes; the elder with his seraph's face and yellow, tousled halo.

"I am not going to marry any one," said I hastily.

III

No one has occupied more of the surface of my life than my Cousin Pauline, but it was a long time before she found her way within. There were compunctious years when I left the door on the latch, even set it wide, with silent caution; but when she came by she closed it against herself and locked it, and sat and wept exasperatingly long on the threshold. And I shall always be afraid that I ought to have opened it earlier; that it was my fault. Why I did not, I cannot even now quite understand. To be made the confidante of a high-minded, undisciplined, self-absorbed, and incidentally beautiful woman should have awakened the emotions of a romantic little girl of eleven; but although there is no doubt that I listened greedily and even lay awake nights endeavouring to find a way to reconcile the passionately aspiring soul of my cousin with the intricate conventionalities of her environment, my interest was ungratefully impersonal, I had always a sense of the impropriety of the situation. At New Hope grown people and children alike had their reserves. My Cousin Pauline had no reserves, with young or old; and instinctively, unconsciously, I

criticised and distrusted her. Her boys did also, but with a frankness of speech more naïve than my polite silences.

It was one of her griefs that they did not love her as ideal sons ought to love their mother. I wished that she would not tell me so, but she did, very often, especially that first summer when she was deciding to marry the marchese. Lucian and Cyrus, on their part, for all their outspokenness, never complained of any lack of love on her part.

When I was eleven years old I thought my Cousin Pauline must be the most beautiful woman in the world; and to-day I still feel the spell of her long grey eyes, the eyes of Guenevere, as grey as glass; the spell of the long curves of her mouth; of the delicate dark fluff of her parted hair—"her filmy, flying, twilight hair," Lucian called it in a poem he wrote at fifteen under the influence of Wordsworth. Lucian was always writing poems to his mother when he was a little boy, and she kept them in a Florentine box of gilded vellum and read them aloud to me and other people. One of the things for which I reproach myself is that I have never read her the poems he has written to me.

Lucian would not mind, I know. He has always been unembarrassed about his verses. And, of course, a good many are included in his little published volume. In her copy, which he had bound in her favourite vellum, she has underlined the ones she thinks he wrote for her. Yet the book is one of her minor griefs; she had expected him to dedicate it to her. But she was in Italy that year, and he and Cyrus and I were quarrelling with our trustees

because they would not let us endow a social settlement we were fond of; and he dedicated the book to his Lady Poverty.

I am glad, now, that the trustees were firm, for I have come to think endowed settlements, under present conditions, more or less of a snare, but I was younger then, and Lucian had not met Lazarus Samson. If the trustees had known what we should do with the money when we got our hands on it, they would have allowed us, preferably, to endow any number of settlements, I am sure. However, I do not complain of the trustees. They really made for peace in the family; so long as we could all agree in execrating them we did not drift too far apart. Sometimes they were the only bond of union between my Cousin Pauline and me; for she gives them more trouble than we did: partly because her income, which is perpetual—she has no capital—is smaller than ours, while her capacity for giving it away is greater, and partly because the marriage with the marchese has made complications.

Until I was quite far along in my teens I used to fear that I was responsible for that marriage with the marchese. No one was ever keener to serve humanity than my Cousin Pauline, and her description of the opportunities for service on those great Italian estates added fuel to my own co-operative ardours. And the boys would not miss her; they never missed her as sons should miss their mother. I used to try to protest at this point, but unfortunately I knew it was true.—They must be away at school in any event; she must play an increasingly smaller rôle in their life. And in America one could

not practise a Franciscan life; but in Italy, in the country of St. Francis!

"We are led, my dear little Clara Co-operativa. Always, all my life I have been led. Again and again I have been at the edge of despair and the way opens. At the darkest moment of my life, when to live in the same house with the children's father seemed more than I—but never mind. No; I cannot speak of that now;—sometime"—she hesitated—"when you are a little older?"

"Yes," said I, fascinated, yet edging away in embarrassment.

"And this time it is this dear little cousin who opens the way for me; this dear little Pintorricchio—but there is already in your face, sweetheart, a solemnity, a severity even, that his women do not have. Yes; not really a Pintorricchio. And we will have on our estates another co-operative colony like your New Hope. Shall we?—Perhaps I shall cook the macaroni!—Do you know what I have arranged to-day, *carina*? I meant it for a surprise. I have sent three subscriptions to that wonderful little *Message*—one for Lucian, one for Cyrus, one for me. And I have written your Welsh saint that he is to kick the old printing press one last time and accept a new one from me. Yes; is it not worth while to have come to us for this—to be a little missionary to your poor Cousin Pauline and all those heavenly peasants with their calm faces of the Perugineschi?"

And I thought it could be done. I had never seen an Italian peasant. I had never seen the marchese.

Uncle Lew wrote us a beautiful letter about the new printing press. It had come at a time when he needed cheering, for there were more cases of fever at the colony. It is when I look at my Cousin Pauline through Uncle Lew's eyes that I find her most lovable. Indeed, all the world becomes more lovable when I look at it through Uncle Lew's eyes. And yet, he had no illusions in regard to the world.

IV

It was quite true that to be Franciscan in America, as my Cousin Pauline had said, was next to impossible. We had but one cassock among us and we were not allowed to appear in that after four in the afternoon. We might not sit by the roadside and beg. We might not sleep out at night in the holes in the rocks. We dramatised the events of the *Fioretti*—the conversion of Brother Wolf, of the three robbers, the pranks of Brother Juniper; I defended my convent valiantly against the Saracens; Lucian added a new laud almost every day to the Canticle of the Sun or to Fra Jacopone's song in praise of poverty; Cyrus preached a whole series of sermons to the birds, each one from a different text. He used to look his text up before he went to bed, and plan his sermon when he woke in the middle of the night; he was never a good sleeper. And he had his own ideas about a suitable delivery, had Cyrus.

"You don't go about *a gran voce predicando* to birds," he used to say. "And you don't wave your arms at them. You stand still as the terra-cotta San Francesco in Santa Maria degli Angeli."

And so he would stand, speaking in that dry, gentle voice of his, at first slowly, but as he became absorbed in his theme a little faster, and a little faster, until Lucian and I were leaning forward breathless, racing to catch the level, running words. And always it was a sermon adapted to his audience; he never forgot that he was preaching to birds; all his figures of speech were winged and feathery, all his allusions were ornithological; so *pratique*, as Lucian would say. I remember there was one sermon about Noah and the dove, and another about the swallow and her young, and another about the sparrow that fell to the ground, and another about Elijah's ravens. But the one that moved us most was concerned with the snare of the fowler. I can shut my eyes to-day and see again the dreadful Italian bird-trap—the captive decoy singing above the treacherous thicket, and all the little pierced, dead birds within—that Cyrus knew so well. I can hear again the horrid simplicity of his language, the suppressed shiver in his voice as he described the fluttering, dying lark, or the six small spitted birds roasting *à la broche*.

But even the sermons were only play. The one bird who ever listened was the Geneva nightingale in the music-box. What was the use of being minors if we couldn't act like minors? No one had as yet enlightened us as to the difference between the legal and the religious aspects of the word, and Lucian's mysticism gave us no satisfactory answer to our question; for Lucian, according to his own explanation of himself, was *mystique symboliste*, and demanded a certain amount of objectivity from existence.

There was one day, however, when we did almost achieve reality. My Cousin Pauline went to New York on the morning train, with many mysterious assurances that she should bring me a surprise when she came back; and we, when we had seen her off, were to be allowed to climb a favourite little mountain and spend our day at the top, feasting our Lady Poverty on blue berries and dry bread, with water borne aloft from the brook in a bottle. This out-of-door freedom, so long as our whereabouts were known, was a part of the process of Americanisation deemed necessary for my cousins, but we had never before been allowed to take our lunch and be gone all day. Cousin Pauline's vanishing face at the train window no doubt increased the recklessness of our imaginations.

"I have a plan," said Lucian. We were at the cross-roads, where we turn to go up the valley. "We'll get out here, Spellman, and walk," he added. And the unsuspecting coachman drew up and let us out.

Cyrus came last, dragging the cassock after him. The cassock had not been prominent in our Franciscanism for a week past, owing to the weather; and this was a particularly hot day.

"You haven't brought that!" I exclaimed.

"Well, of course, he can wear it if he likes," said Lucian.

But Cyrus explained that it was not his turn. We stared discomfited at the woolly thing lying in the dust at our feet.

"You know," I said at last, "he is right. If we are going to wear a cassock we ought to wear it. But I can't remember whose turn it is."

"It is not the outside of things that counts," mused Lucian. "I do not think it was mine."

"Then you might as well say it makes nothing if we wear no clothes at all," pursued Cyrus. "And you know that is not so."

"How do I know?" his brother asked, and not waiting for a reply, began to chant the quatrain he had composed for these emergencies:—

*"Bro ther Fran cis, who shall wear
The cas sock grey of Sis ter Clare?
He shall wear the cas sock grey,
On whose head my hands I lay."*

The laying on of hands ended upon his own head, as I, who had a turn for mathematics, had known it would when he began by counting himself first. I suspected him of doing penance.

"I would really like to wear it," I pleaded.

"What a fib!" said Lucian, putting it on. "Now listen, *frati miei*," and he unfolded his plan. It was worthy of a brother minor.

We were to separate, scattering our bread to our sisters and brothers the birds as we went.

"She doesn't know what dry bread means, that cook!" Cyrus exclaimed, opening his package. "Here are cookies and an egg."

"*Niente, niente*; scatter them!" said his brother.

And we were to eat only such food as we could honestly earn by the sweat of our brows.

"Do you mean go into a house and ask them to let us work for our dinner?" I inquired.

"Yes. What is that word?—Chores!"

"People we don't know?" faltered Cyrus.

"Would people we do know let us work for them? Do they, ever?" Lucian demanded.

Cyrus and I eyed each other gloomily. Still, if the occasion called for martyrs we could always screw up courage enough to march conscientiously to the stake. It has never been a question of courage with Lucian; he goes singing and dancing.

"And if no one gives us work?" Cyrus suggested.

"Then remain hungry."

"I would rather."

"You cannot rather. You will have to ask. Cyrus, you are under a vow; obedience; remember!" Lucian's voice was firm.

And now, who would be Brother Masseo, and spin? Cyrus did not offer. He evidently felt that the day's work was sufficiently heavy—and spinning made him sea-sick. It was not fair to expect Lucian to spin in the hot cassock.

"I will be Brother Masseo," said I.

And even as Brother Masseo spun round and round, six hundred years ago on the Umbrian highway, at the merry bidding of Brother Francis, to decide in which direction they two should go on their missionary journey—to Florence?—to Arezzo?—to Siena?—so did I twirl on the highway in New Hampshire, until the trees swam and the hills heaved.

"Head for Cyrus, feet for me, right hand for Lucian," I gasped, and fell sprawling, my head toward Portland, my feet toward home, my right hand pointing to the woods.

By the time I had spat the dust out of my mouth, Lucian was over the fence, capering towards the trees.

"I need not ask at every house; I can choose, you think?" Cyrus hazarded.

"Once will be enough," I assured him. "I only mean to ask once."

"I shall ask three times," he said, in a depressed voice, and started down the road, scattering cookie crumbs.

But Lucian was calling from the field.

"Listen!" he shouted, "I have made a new laud.—Blessed be our Lord God for our Sister Cassock, for she clothes the naked, and very modest is she, and woolly and warm both winter and summer; and she is a discipline to the proud."

Chanting at the top of his voice, he turned and galloped up the field.

A curve of the road hid Cyrus. I got up from the dust, shook my skirts, and set forth without enthusiasm upon my own quest.

V

There were many lions in my path, but the first was one day to be a real lion, if I had but known it. He was, that summer, a blue-eyed, thin-faced young man named Tristram Lawrence, who lived in a little white house by the roadside and came to tea sometimes and asked me questions about Nicholas, who was a class-mate of his, and about the colony; superciliously amused questions they were, as if neither Nicholas nor the colony was to be taken seriously. My Cousin Pauline was interested in him because he thought Buddha more admirable than

Jesus Christ. To Lucian he was attractive because he was named for the lover of Iseult the fair—whoever she might be, or Buddha, either, for that matter—and because the little white house was crammed with books in strange tongues which even Lucian could not read.

As I passed along the road, that adventurous day, the young man sat by a window with his lean, greyhound face dipped down into a book; and to my relief he did not look up. But his fox terrier capered at my heels up the sandy stretch of hill and obligingly ate my cookies.

Farther on our view shone out: the bare ledge of precipice across the river, and the far, serene summits of the Presidents. I could see the red roof of our house above the birch trees that climbed our ridge. What should I do if any of the small army of servants who ministered to my Cousin Pauline's simple life—the term had not been copyrighted in those days—were anywhere within eyeshot? Here was no lion; a dragon, rather, many-eyed.

Our farmer's wife, however, was not at her dairy window. I slunk along close to the fence. Our farmer was not at the lower gateway, nor at the upper. Beyond the upper gateway I began to run, quite unreasonably, and I ran myself out of breath and had to sit down and rest in front of a shabby farmhouse with a splendid view of the high mountains.

But my eyes were blind to the view. Should I ask for work at the farmhouse? No;—they would recognise me; I was too near home. I got up and went on. Would not all these people know me

along this road? I was aware that my cousins and I were objects of interest to the countryside.

I passed a little box of a house where a man made fox-skin rugs with pinked flannel around their edges. I might offer to pink the flannel. But I did not offer.

Presently the road divided, and I took the narrower branch because there were ribbons of grass between the wheel-ruts. I followed it a long way, meeting no one. I wondered how many miles I had walked. I thought of Cyrus, walking, walking, walking in the opposite direction. How tired he must be! Suppose some one should kidnap Cyrus!—I thought of Lucian, singing and dancing through the woods. I thought of bears.

The road stopped at an unpainted house nestling under a rugged, craggy little mountain. All around the base of the crag green meadows smiled and smiled to the river-edge. About the rotting doorstep little skinny, tow-headed children tumbled and squabbled; but each stood on its own spindle-legs and stared, voiceless, when I appeared. A boy older than the others, Lucian's age perhaps, sat in the doorway hammering two sticks together with a tack-hammer. When the silence fell he looked up.

Never was there such an alert boy. He had bright brown eyes that saw the whole of me at once. He had a voice as hard and bright as his eyes.

"How do you do?" he said politely.

"How do you do?" said I.

"Have you come to go up the mountain?" he asked, laying hammer and sticks inside the door.

"Will you please ask your mother if she wants

any help," said I, plunging. "I will work all day, till five o'clock, for my dinner."

"How?" said he in the vernacular, meaning "what."

"I can mind a baby, and sweep and dust, and darn stockings, and peel potatoes. I can do a great many other things."

"Have you run away from your folks?" he inquired.

Had I? I evaded the question and replied that I was an orphan.

He regarded me curiously. Did he know who I was?

"Go and ask your mother!" I repeated.

"She don't have no help. She does it all, what I don't do." The answer was final.

"How far is it to the next house?" I asked, backing away.

"There ain't any. We're the end of the road."

"Good-bye," I said. I had asked for work and been refused; now I could go hungry with a clear conscience. But the boy ran after me and walked at my side.

"Say!" he said, in a business-like tone; "you may not be this way again soon; you better let me show you up the mountain. It's a regular mountain day."

I did not want to go home so early without Lucian and Cyrus.

"Next week we'll be hayin' and I couldn't take you," said the boy.

I looked up at the mountain. It was very small.

"I can find my way, I guess."

"Well, you guess again. Last week there was

two of them old maids from down the valley, summer folks, and they thought they was so smart, they didn't want me taggin' on. And they kep' agoin' round and around, halfway up, and never come out on top at all."

So I resigned myself into the hands of this capable boy, and presently we were scrambling up a blazed trail. We said little; we needed our breath for the climb; but at the top, when he had named all the mountains for me and pointed out the Glen, and we were sitting at the edge of the precipice, looking down on the river and the railroad, and the jumble of houses that he called "the town," he became confidential. I know, now, that it was all a part of his rôle as mountain guide to summer ladies.

"If ever I'm governor of this state," he remarked casually, "I'm goin' to run a trolley line from the railroad station clean up through Carter Notch. There's money in railroads.—I bet you I'll be the richest man in New Hampshire, some day. What'll you bet I won't?"

I said he would have to be an engineer if he wanted to make a trolley line, and wasn't he a farmer?

"Oh, no, I don't," he corrected me. "Jay Gould didn't have to be an engineer." He paused, regarding me fixedly. "And neither did Jesse Emery."—I made no sign.—"What'll you bet I'm as rich as Jesse Emery some day? His father wasn't no better than my father, my father says. And he wasn't ever a coal miner, but he owned more coal mines than you can shake a stick at—didn't he?"

I looked at him in defiant silence.

"If he could, why can't I?"

"It is wicked to own things like coal mines and railroads, that ought to belong to everybody," I explained.

"I wouldn't say that if I was you. It isn't pretty, and you're just tryin' to be smart."

"I will say it if I like."

He evidently restrained himself with difficulty. He withdrew his eyes from mine and gazed down the valley. "Everything belongs to the one that can buy it," he said.

"That isn't true."

He turned upon me with incisive speech—"I didn't call you a liar when you said your father and mother was dead. Now don't you call me a liar. If it was one of your brothers I'd lick him."

"I haven't any brothers. And my father and mother are dead. And it isn't true."

We glared at each other. "I'm goin' to be the richest man in the whole world when I grow up," he said at last. "And I'm goin' to buy all the railroads and coal mines I can lay my hands on. And they'll be mine."

"You're not either!" I retorted. "By the time you grow up everybody will be as rich as everybody else."

"Say!—I never heard of such a thing," he shouted. "You're crazy."

"You wait and see!"

"You wait and see yourself! I bet you I'm as rich as—as rich as Jesse Emery." Again he gave me a queer look. "I bet you I'm as rich as you are."

"I'm poor," I replied.

"I wouldn't try to beat that, if I was you," he jeered. "It makes three and it's a whopper."

I chose to preserve a haughty silence, and he flipped stones over the precipice. When he found that I would not renew the conversation he began again:—

"Say; I know who you are."

I waited.

"You're Jesse Emery's grand-daughter."

"I am not."

"And you've got two brothers and a mother."

"I have not."

He was annoyed. "Say; you don't know when to stop, do you?"

"I am not his grand-daughter."

"Well, your name's Emery."

"Yes."

"What Emery?"

"He was my great-uncle."

"Your great-uncle?" He considered this.—

"And them boys?"

"They are my second cousins."

"Oh!" He had evidently decided to accept my word.—"And didn't he leave you nothin'?"

"Yes; but I can't help it if he did; and when I grow up I'm going to give it all away. So I'm not rich. I'm poor."

"Hoh!" he sniffed. "I bet you don't."

"I bet I do."

"You'll have more sense when you grow up."

"No, I shan't."

"Haw—haw!—No, you shan't!—Caught you that time. You don't know what you'll do."

"Neither do you know what you'll do."

"I do, too. I'll look out for number one; my father says I will. I ain't a fool."

Again conversation languished, but the boy was not fond of silence. "He was here last summer," he remarked after a minute or two.

"Who?"

"Your great-uncle. We always just call him Jesse Emery round here. He was down to this end of town tryin' to buy this farm, but the man we work it for wouldn't sell. He thought he could make old Jesse pay through the nose; but that was where he was too smart, because now old Jesse's dead the trustees ain't buyin' farms. And I took him up this mountain. It was a pull, but he done it. And he set over there on that boulder and wiped the sweat off his face, and he said, 'It's a great country.' And he said he wished his two little grandsons was as up and comin' American boys as me. And he asked me what I was goin' to be. And he laughed. And he said, 'I'll bet on you, Cuthbert.' That's my name—Cuthbert Sylvester—he remembered it from the time he come before. And when he got into the buggy he said, 'Don't you forget I've got my eye on you, Cuthbert.' And he give me a five-dollar bill for showin' him up this mountain. The most anybody else ever paid me was a quarter."

I could feel myself growing scarlet. This boy who looked out for number one expected me to pay him for bringing me up the mountain.

"All what I earn I put in a box," he continued. "Some day I'm goin' to the Academy and to Harvard

College; and I thought if old Jesse kept on seein' me summers he might give me a start in business. I tell you what, I'm sorry he died."

"I think I ought to go now," said I hurriedly. What could I give him instead of money? All the way down the mountain I revolved this mortifying problem. Once he broke in upon my perplexities by exclaiming:—

"I bet you I've got just as good a right to be rich as he had."

"That's what I keep telling you," I replied impatiently. "Everybody ought to be as rich as everybody else."

He brooded over this as we slid and tripped over the rough trail.

At the house he bade me wait, and he ran in and brought out a would-be-rustic picture frame made of varnished twigs.

"Would you like it?" he asked. "I make them to sell."

"I have no money," I faltered.

"I'll come down to your place for it. I've been huntin' a reason to come." He tried to press the frame into my hands.

"No, no; please!"

"Don't you like it?"

"It's very pretty."

"Then here!—Or, well—I tell you what:—I'll bring it. I'll come and see you and them boys."

I welcomed the respite. But I still owed him for taking me up the mountain. I felt in my pocket. There was the hard-boiled egg.

"Take this!" I gasped, thrusting it at him.

"Why?" He looked surprised.

"Because I want you to. Because I can't take it home." I turned and ran away from him down the narrow road, but his voice pursued me:—

"Is it a bad one?—Say; I can't come till after hayin', but I'll come. Say; you never told me why you wanted to work for your dinner. Oh, say!—I bet I know."

VI

Late that afternoon I turned in at our gateway, a very dusty, weary, hungry minorite. It was all very well not to believe in money, but what were you going to do if other people did believe in it, and would do things for you, and expected to be paid for them? It was all very well to co-operate, but suppose there were only two people in the world and one wanted to co-operate and the other wanted to compete? What were you going to do about it?

My gloomy reverie was interrupted by a soft chirrup. Lucian had come home before me. On the lawn, near the turn of the road, there was a great clump of cinnamon roses, all pink and prickles. The chirrup came again. I made a dash for the clump, but Lucian's voice stayed me:—

"No, no! Stop where you are! Turn round and shut your eyes!"

"Why?"

"Because I haven't a stitch on."

I abruptly did as I was bid. "Hurry up and put them on!" I commanded.

"I can't. I've lost them."

"Lucian!—All your clothes?"

"Except my sandals. I've been dodging round this rose bush for an hour, waiting for you and trying not to be seen. I was afraid to run across the lawn. One is so—so visible, without clothes.—Clara, if you would go to my room and get me a pair of corduroys and a sweater? Never mind the underneath."

I started at once.

"And, Clara!—a belt!—Do not forget a belt!—There is a leather one somewhere."

Five minutes later he was clothed and ready to tell me his adventures.

"Now I know how it feels to be both naked and hungry," he began ecstatically, rocking back and forth on his heels. "You don't need to press your fingers in your eyes, Clara, I am *tout comme il faut*."

"It is just that my head snaps a little from running."

"Snaps from running?"

"You see—I haven't had anything to eat either."

"Clara! You also have had adventures? Is it not glorious?" He cast himself upon his empty stomach and waved his heels in the air. "Tell me of yours!"

"No; you first."

"*Ebbene*!—I am something like St. Paul. I have been hungry.—I am. I have been naked. I have been beaten with rods——"

"Oh, Lucian!—No!"

"I have been beaten with rods; yes. I have been persecuted for righteousness' sake. Perhaps I have been robbed; *chi lo sa?* At any rate I could

not find them where I left them. But I will begin.—You know how I went up that field? ”

I nodded.

“ And when I came into the woods it was so solitary. Who would have thought that any one inhabited those woods!—I said, this will be a day to practise contemplation, like Brother Giles. You remember, Clara, how he would become lost in the heavenly vision, and deaf and blind to this earth, and stand in a dream? And if the little boys in the street would cry, ‘ *Paradiso, Frate Egidio, Paradiso!* ’ it was enough to make him fall into that holy trance? But to contemplate is not so easy; and at first I thought it was because there were no little boys to cry, ‘ *Paradiso!* ’ and then I thought it was because of all those clothes. Contemplatives do not wear so many. And it was hot!—You cannot imagine! ”

“ Yes, I can. ”

“ And I took off everything except only the cassock, for that I was sworn to wear. And I hid them in a tight bundle—oh, but carefully!—among trees and rocks by the side of a brook that foamed and laughed. And I went up and up along a little *sentiero*—path?—that became after a while a road; but rough! And while I waited for the vision of the heavenly Jerusalem I sang all my lauds, and the Canticle of the Sun, and Fra Jacopone’s *Povertade*; and I made a new laud, to the trees. Listen!—

“ Blessed be our Lord God for our brothers and sisters the trees, their leaves and their roots and their benevolent shadows; for the trees that dance and the trees that sing, and especially for the beeches of La Verna, because they sing ‘ Alleluia! ’

"Some day you will hear them at La Verna, Clara *mia*, in the wood above the chapel of the Stigmata."

A reminiscent look gathered in his eyes. He rocked back and forth, humming his laud.

"And then?" said I.

"Oh, yes!—and then, when I did not expect it, there were two or three queer little houses of logs, with black paper nailed on the roofs, and the thinnest, sickest little girl in a hammock under the trees, and two women in one of the houses where there was a stove. They were French, from Canada. I talked to them. And I performed a work of mercy. I sang to the little girl—not lauds, but, *Tiens, p'tit Jean, voilà ta soupe!* and *Malbrouck* and *Le Sieur de Framboisie*. And when I asked for work they sent me up in the woods where their men were chopping wood. And one of the women kissed me and said she would put another onion in the soup. And I felt pleased with myself. You can imagine! But with the men it was different. There were three of them and they had made such a mess. That is not the way they cut trees in the school of forestry at Vallombrosa. A great bare place with stumps of the very largest trees. It seemed as if they bled of syrup, and everywhere were branches and chips. And the sun came down dry and hot. It was like a hell. I did not wish to do that kind of work. And I asked them, 'Why do you cut down these beautiful trees?' And one said, 'For the paper company,' and one said, 'For pulp,' and the third said, 'What is that to you?' And I said, 'You make a mistake. You have cut enough. It dries up the brooks to cut

the trees. In Umbria, in Italy, there are not enough trees, and the earth is dry and yellow. Stop!' I said. And they laughed and told me, 'They are not your trees.' And I was becoming angry, and I said, 'The trees and the forests are not mine, neither yours. They are the good God's. They are for all of us. You may cut one here, one there, if it is ripe—but not this way.' And they laughed louder, and they said to me, 'What will you do about it—you?'—And I was in a holy rage by that time. You have never seen me that way, Clara; I am out of myself quite as much as if I were a contemplative, but in another manner. And I said, 'See what I will do!' And I sang my new laud of the trees before the largest tree, and I said, '*Nomine Patris, Filii, Spiritus,*' and made the sign of the cross upon the tree, and upon the one next to it, always saying, '*Nomine Patris*'—and upon the one next to that. But then the biggest man caught me and swore long French swearings, and they were all a-swear and a-shout, and he jerked my cassock over my head; and I could not see; and he beat me with a stick."

"Lucian, Lucian, he hurt you!" I cried.

My cousin rubbed a suggestive portion of his anatomy reflectively. "Why, yes; I believe so. But when one is in a holy rage one feels only on the inside."

"I hope you kicked him! I hope you bit him! Oh, oh, it is too dreadful!"

"Yes; is it not?" said Lucian. "I would have blessed some more when he let me go, but they drove me away; and there were three of them, grown men. But the ones I blessed they will not touch, I know."

If you could have seen their faces when I made the holy sign! ”

“ You must use Pond’s extract.”

“ How many do you think they have cut down since I came away? ” He got up and walked around me restlessly. “ Not very many, for they would eat their dinner. And they are slow, those men; peasants. How many?—Clara, I shall make the trustees buy them. I shall write a letter to-night.”

“ San Francesco did not buy things,” said I.

There was a queer trapped look in his eyes. I have seen it there many times since. He stared at me, then threw out his hands helplessly, and began again to walk.

“ But it must be that something can be done! ” he said.

I had nothing to suggest.

“ *Ebbene*—to finish! I did not see the women when I came to the camp; and the little sick girl was asleep. And suddenly I thought how it would be Franciscan to give her my warm cassock because her father had beaten me. And I laid it over her softly. And the lunch was in the pocket.—Clara, I shall write a letter to tell the trustees; I do not think it is true what that man said.—And then I was naked and I ran through the woods like our Father Adam. And do you know—I could not find those clothes!—Every rock, how it is like another rock, in the woods. And if it was a birch tree or a pine tree where I hid them, I could not remember. I hunted every centimetre.”

I laughed.

“ Yes; it is funny. And you should have seen

me skipping behind the trees all the way home. And there were so many wagons on this road where nothing passes—it would astonish you! One with eleven women in it, and seven of them with *pince-nez*, and two of them with opera glasses. I lay down flat behind a little ridge where bushes grew, and peeped at them.—Oh, my brothers and sisters the trees, you have been kind to me to-day. How shall I be kind to you? How shall I? Clara, say something!”

VII

It was almost six o'clock before Cyrus came. Lucian and I were beginning to think we should have to tell Candeloro and the farmer's wife what we had been doing.

“It will be very disagreeable,” said Lucian.

I peeped around the rose thicket at the farmhouse, tiptoed cautiously to the fence and hung over the top rail. A little figure was coming up the road. I waved to it and went back to Lucian.

“He is very tired,” I said, “he stumbles at every step.”

Lucian looked unhappy.

When we heard the dragging footsteps we chirruped, and the little boy came slowly around the great bush and stood before us, mute. Involuntarily we hitched away from him.

“*Per carità!*” exclaimed Lucian. “How unbearably you smell! And you look like Fra Jacopone da Todi when he smeared feathers over him and went to the wedding.”

Cyrus surveyed himself indifferently. Curly chicken feathers clung to his corduroys; there were feathers and bits of hay in his hair; his shirt was blood-stained, and one knee was caked with mud and something else sticky and yellow that had run down his leg.

"If I were a leper," he said drearily, "I could not blame San Francesco for not wanting to kiss me." He held his hands away from him, the dirty little fingers spread wide.

"Cyrus, have you been stabbed?" I questioned fearfully.

"No; it is the blood of chickens," he replied in that tired, monotonous voice. He let himself down to the ground stiffly, and sat cross-legged.

"He is never *exalté* after an adventure," said Lucian. "But do not be too slow, *fratellino mio*, you must wash off that smell before supper."

"It will tell quickly," said Cyrus. "There was a man came behind me in a wagon. At least, I made the mistake to think it was a man, but it was a devil who concealed his tail in his trousers and his horns beneath his hat."

Lucian and I exchanged glances of tolerant amusement.

"If San Francesco could be tempted by a devil, why not I?" asked Cyrus, fixing his pale eyes upon us gravely. "And I was like Brother Rufino who saw the vision of the Crucified and thought he must obey it, and he did not know it was a devil. Neither I. And I saw a vision of a freckled farmer who called me 'Sonny;' and I thought I must obey him. And there was no dear San Francesco to wipe off

those freckles and say to me, 'Flee, Fratellino Cyrus; you must not obey this man.' And when the man stopped and said, 'Want a ride, sonny?' I did not flee. I got up on the seat. And I was very polite. I said, 'Monsieur, if you have work for a boy, little, like me, I will do it very willingly for my dinner.' And he said, 'Canuck, are you? You don't look it.' And I did not know what that was—Canuck; but I think now it was a word of magic—a spelling word. So he said, 'Wal, sonny, if you want to work you've struck my busy day. I got a rush order for broilers for the "Mount Madison," due at the "five o'clock," and four dozen eggs.' "

"You do take him off well," said I. "It is exactly as if we heard him." But Cyrus was unmoved by my praise.

"I thought if boilers were things you boiled things in, broilers were things you broiled things in," he continued. "But they are not. They are chickens. Not grown-up chickens, and not fuzzy baby ones, but in the middle, halfway."

"Adolescent," suggested Lucian. He was always supplying us with strange new words.

"But first he showed me to hunt eggs, in a barn that is not like ours, but full of dung. And before dinner I found three dozen; but I knelt on one. This knee."

Cyrus looked down at the injured member listlessly.

"He was cross after that. He said I was slow.—I was.—I am.—He was a truthful devil. It was not until after the dinner that he became truly fiendish. He took a chicken in each hand, by their

necks—so; and he wringed them round and round—so——”

“Don’t—don’t!” I cried.

“With a kind of flipping jerk he did it. And then he took two more.—And then he took two more——”

“Cyrus, don’t!” I shrieked.

“And so on.—And when they were dead—I hope they were dead—he showed me to souse them in boiling water—so; and to pluck their feathers out—so——”

“Cyrus Emery—you never did that wicked thing!” said Lucian.

“I had said I would work for him. I thought I must obey him. I thought it was my vow of obedience that I must. That is where I am like Brother Rufino in the *Fioretti*; I cannot tell a devil from a man. But I plucked them very badly because I could not help shutting my eyes when I did it. And when the devil saw my face he laughed. And he took a little chicken that was alive, and he put it in my hand and said, ‘Wring it!’ And I prayed in my heart, ‘O God—O San Francesco—do not let me kill my brother the chicken.’ And I did not kill it. But I wish I had, for I did not wring it enough—and it suffered. And the man laughed. And by his dreadful laugh I knew at last who he was. I screamed, ‘*Demonio, io ti sfido!*’ And the egg basket was there, and I hit him with two of his eggs, on his mouth and in his eyes. You say I cannot hit anything, but you should have seen!—And I ran, and ran, and ran.”

He paused, examining his fingers, which during the latter part of his tale he had held upright and

distended before him, his elbows resting on his knees.

"Well, anyway," said I with an assumption of cheerfulness, "you had dinner; and that's more than Lucian and I did."

"Yes, I had it," he agreed, letting his fingers droop dejectedly, "but I am not *nourri*. After I had run and run and run, I had a *mal de mer*.—Everything."

He did not move after this; he simply sat there cross-legged on the ground, his elbows on his knees, his fingers drooping from his wrists, his face expressionless. If he had been a little cleaner I could have put my arms around him and kissed him. I wish I had, anyhow. But I didn't.

"*Poverino!*" murmured Lucian. "*Poverino!*"

And Candeloro, the boys' valet, coming round the rose bush discovered us.

"*Cosa hanno fatto al bimbo?*" he demanded, and without waiting for our reply, picked up the unresisting Cyrus and bore him away.

Lucian and I sat a while longer, plucking at blades of grass and avoiding each other's eyes. The level rays of the sun dusted the hills across the river with a purple bloom. A vireo rippled.

"If you don't want to do it any more, we can stop," said Lucian.

"Do what?" but I knew.

"Play brothers minor."

"I am not playing."

Lucian did not contradict this statement, he merely paused.

The vireo rippled.

"What do you suppose San Francesco would have done about those trees?" Lucian asked presently.

"I don't know."

"If only some one would give me those trees—the way Ser Orlando gave the woods at La Verna to San Francesco, to be a holy place for ever."

"Do you think I like owing that boy money?" I flashed. "If he were a rich boy like you, it wouldn't have mattered."

"You might just as well say like us," said Lucian.

"I am not rich."

There was another pause. Then he turned to me with perplexed, knitted brows.

"I do not understand why the money troubles you so much, Clara," he said. "To me it is the least real thing in all the world, that money. I cannot seem to make it real. It is not a part of my soul."

"Then buy the trees!" I snapped viciously.

"Oh!" he said—and I did not know why. It was quite a minute before he astonished me by adding, "That does make it real. It makes it a master, too: as if it said, 'You cannot do without me,' doesn't it?"

I was puzzled. I did not know what he was talking about. I had to consider before I understood.

"Is it a devil or not, that money?—I don't know," he said. "I'm like Cyrus. But, you see, if we have to live like other people when we grow up?—if we cannot help ourselves?—if the world is made so?"

"Uncle Lew doesn't live like other people," said I coldly.

CHAPTER III

CONCERNING UTOPIAS

I

ONE other day burns unforgettable through that summer's golden blur.

Under the date July 29, in the little diary I kept—for Uncle Lew and the autobiography—I find the characters of the Greek alphabet painstakingly inscribed, and—

“Tristram Lawrence taught me this if I would call him Tristram. We made hay to-day, all of us. Remind Lucian to ask Cousin Pauline to send for an algebra for Cuthbert Sylvester. Perhaps Helen will let me lend her the money to go to college.” Then there is a blistered space, and in a shaky hand I had written—“I cannot write the rest.” And there is an old letter pinned to this page of the diary.

It was during Helen's visit—for Helen was the surprise that my Cousin Pauline brought me from New York. Nicholas, too, was in the valley, visiting his classmate Mr. Lawrence, the young teacher in the white house;—and finally, there was the marchese, who had stopped over in our little village on his way to South America to climb the Andes. I remember Cyrus looked up the route and said he could have gone more direct. But the marchese and my Cousin Pauline were, as Helen expressed it, getting engaged.

"Sometimes I think she likes Tristram or Nicholas quite as well," I suggested.

"Perhaps she does," Helen agreed, "but they are not the kind she marries."

"You mean they are younger than she is?"

"I mean she is worldly."

"Worldly? Oh, Helen, that's because you don't like her."

"I hope I don't dislike her. I'm trying very hard not to; she paid my fare up here and I'm her guest. I don't think I'm very nice to talk about her. Let's change the subject. Clara, I feel as if I should burst if I went another day without saying how killing I think those boys are."

"Killing?" My tone was dignified. We were sitting together in the middle of a haycock.

"The idea of their kissing their mother's hand when they say good-night."

"It's Italian."

"And the way they talk!"

"They're losing that. They talked much queerer when I first came. But I like it."

"And I suppose you like them kissing your hand," taunted Helen.

"They don't kiss my hand," I protested, blushing at the memory of Lucian's greeting.

"But you'd be sure to if they did. You always like everything that everybody does that you like. You think these boys are perfect. I don't. That Lucian acts as if he knew everything. You can't say a thing that he doesn't say, 'Oh, yes, I read about it in this book, or that book, or the other book.'"

"Don't you like him, Helen?" I inquired anxiously.

"I don't know. I'm pretty sure I like Cyrus best. And there's one thing I do know—your Cousin Pauline doesn't like me. She would like to speak to me the way she does to Antoinette.—Kindly; oh, yes! I can't see what you could have told her about me, Clara; but she got her mind all fixed for another kind of person, and then—the minute she saw me, I saw it in her face. I suppose it is because my nose is puggy."

"Oh, Helen!" I cried ruefully.

"I wish she had liked me." Helen's tone was serious, ruminative. "If she had——"

"If she had?" I prompted.

"Nothing."

For a minute or two neither of us said anything; then Helen introduced a new subject.

"I am not going to college after all," she remarked with elaborate carelessness.

"Oh, Helen!" I rose up on my elbow.

"At least, that's what sister says. I don't say it, yet."

"I don't see what business it is of your sister's," I cried.

"Well, it is if she won't help me, now that father has sunk all his money in the colony."

"Oh, but by the time you're old enough it will be all right."

"Father's left the colony, you know."

"Left the colony!"

"Yes;—I didn't tell you. All that typhoid and everything made mother make him—quite some

time ago. And he got a chance to supply for a minister in Memphis that was going to Europe. He wrote sister the colony is on its last legs."

"It's no such thing!—Uncle Lew is there—Uncle Lew——"

"Don't shout so, Clara! Those boys will think I'm murdering you."

"It's no such thing," I reiterated.

"Anyway," said Helen, returning to her own grievance, "I'm supposed not to be going to college."

"But I can go, now!" I cried. "And I've been counting on your going, too. And it's what you want to do more than anything."

"Yes, it is."

An illuminating thought sent me upright. I cast myself upon Helen and tried to get my arm around her stiff and unresponsive neck. "Helen! You know I shouldn't want to go without you; but you don't mind going without me"—my voice quavered here; I could not help it—"And so—and so—you go instead of me; will you? Say you will!"

"I will *not*!" said Helen, freeing herself from my embrace.

"I shan't mind giving up. Truly, I shan't!"

"*You* giving up!" she cried, and now she rose on the haycock. "*You'll* never have to give up anything for anybody, Clara Emery!"

"Do you mean?—What do you mean?" I asked. "Do you think there would be enough for both of us, perhaps?"

"No, I do *not*!" she shouted. "There won't ever be enough of anybody else's money for me."

I'll go to college on my own money, thank you; or else I won't go at all."

"Oh, Helen!" I pleaded.

"I guess I can work my way through. Other girls have."

"Have they? I should like to do that!" said I. "It would be co-operative."

"You!" she snorted. "You'll never have to do any real work."

"I don't see why."

"You will see why when you're as old as I am."

"You're only thirteen."

"I'll be fourteen next month; and I wear sixteen-year-old misses' suits. And when you go to New York to live with sister you get old, right away. I know a great deal more about life than you do, Clara. I'm going to be allowed a year at high school and then I'm going to a commercial college to learn typewriting and stenography. That's what sister says. I don't. But if I get ahead of sister I'll be doing well. She did say, when your cousin came to see us, to invite me here—No; I guess I won't tell that."

"Yes; do!"

"No."

"Yes."

"It's something I'm not going to do, anyway. Sister would; but sister and I are different. She believes in taking anything anybody will give you. She says it's the only way to get on in this world. Sister and I quarrel like fury about everything."

"Then she wouldn't mind your going to college with me?"

"It doesn't matter whether she minds or not. It's none of her business."

We must have been quiet for five minutes. I thought all round this problem of Helen's schooling and at last I had a new idea.

"Helen," I said, "would you take enough money to go to college if I just lent it to you? You could pay it back afterwards."

"I don't know," she said reluctantly.

"That means you will!—Oh, *dear* Helen, *please!*"

"I don't want to." But she let me hold her hand a few minutes.

II

"I can't imagine her in a cassock," Cyrus said; and by tacit consent we did not obtrude our Franciscanism upon Helen. As our guest she took the lead in our games. She would probably have taken it in any case, but we had the secret satisfaction of knowing that we voluntarily gave way to her. And the games that Helen liked to play were none of them remarkable for spiritual significance. We played tag, and we climbed trees—a new experience for my cousins. Lucian invariably introduced an intellectual element into this exercise by proclaiming himself the Ancient Mariner, or Columbus; but the imaginative appeal was never too complex. Helen was very good for us, I am sure. After the marchese came she put us up to begging to go with him up our mountains; and in those days the marchese was always ready to please us. There was an agreeable simplicity about him that was very winning.

Nicholas, however, plumbed his possibilities when he said that he ought always to be climbing mountains; that it was a pity not to leave him "on his stalk."

With Nicholas my Cousin Pauline communed along architectural lines. Under her stimulus he developed a theory concerning peasant housing, which he expounded diagrammatically on blue print paper. I remember he had a great roll of it with him that day in the hayfield, and the sheets kept blowing away. It was understood that some day, when the marchese came back from South America, Nicholas was to rebuild the peasants' houses on the marchese's estates.

While Helen and I sat on the haycock holding hands, Nicholas came up to us and said in his solemn, joking fashion, that he wished he were the marchese, for several reasons.

"Not really!" I protested, horrified at the democratic issue involved.

"Catch me hiking off to Chimborazo, if I were," he added, missing my point.

And then my Cousin Pauline called, "Come, children! We are all going to help, this afternoon. I want Lucian and Cyrus to know the joy of getting in their own hay. Think, darlings!—This is what St. Francis used to do——"

"Only it was not his own hay," said the accurate Cyrus.

"And perhaps this very afternoon, far away in Russia, Count Leo Tolstoy in his homespun blouse—like ours" (we were wearing hand-woven linens that summer)—"is working in his hot fields with his peasants, just as we are."

"And to complete the historic parallel you ought to cite Marie Antoinette, you know," said Tristram.

"Scoffer!" laughed my Cousin Pauline. "But some day he shall see that we are in earnest, shall he not, Clara?"

"Oh, Miss Clara is in earnest," he admitted, his eyes quizzing my Cousin Pauline.

That "Miss Clara" of Tristram's always flattered me against my will. He had a way, too, of smiling into my eyes as if we had a secret between us. I used to blush and wriggle, and bat my eyes defensively to evade that intimate look, but it made me feel tender and delicious, and yet improper, in a quite new way.

"Why, don't you know what he is doing?" Helen would say scornfully. "He's flirting. I've seen them flirt with sister."

"Oh, I don't think so!" I would protest, mortified, yet secretly pleased.

Tristram and Nicholas were with us almost daily at this time. There was talk of sending the boys to the preparatory school where Tristram taught the classics, and he and my Cousin Pauline used to go over the prospectuses of different schools together. I remember hearing my Cousin Pauline tell him that she leaned on him intellectually. I remember, too, that I did not know what the "classics" were until that day in the hayfield.

Tristram had tossed his coat on a haycock and Lucian must have seen the book in the pocket of it, for presently, as we raked, we came upon him under the shady side of the haycock, on his stomach, turning the pages.

"Hollo! where did you get that?" Tristram exclaimed, and snatched it. "Yes, it's Greek." He did not look altogether pleased with Lucian. But Lucian, oblivious as usual to all else when there was a book about, pressed an eager finger on a page, and uttered his mandate:—

"Read!"

"You wouldn't understand."

"Never mind," said Lucian, casting himself down on the ground again. "You know you don't want to rake hay."

So Tristram laughed and sat down, drawing me down beside him.

"Are we really getting in hay, or are we only playing getting it in?" asked Cyrus. "Because if we are only playing, I will sit down too."

His mother, with her rake over her shoulder at the truly Arcadian angle, was sauntering toward the river-trees with the marchese. Helen and Nicholas were over by the hay-cart, throwing hay at each other.

Cyrus sat down beside me.

Even as Tristram's eyes had caressed me with his smile, so now they caressed his open book—as if it were dear to him. But there was something more in the smile than had been there when it was for me; something that was never in those eyes for any woman. I saw it, and felt humiliated, although I did not know then that the something's name was reverence.

Οὐκουν, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, μεταβάλλει μὲν τροπον τινὰ τοιόνδε ἐξ
ὀλιγαρχίας εἰς δημοκρατίαν,

he read. He had a low, resonant voice, and the

words came from his lips delicately cadenced, like a strange music. We listened rapt.

δι' ἀπληστίαν τοῦ προκειμένου ἀγαθοῦ, τοῦ ὡς πλουσιώτατον δεῖν γίγνεσθαι; πῶς δῆ;

On and on he read, forgetting us.

"Ατε, οἶμαι, ἄρχοντες ἐν αὐτῇ οἱ ἄρχοντες διὰ τὸ πολλὰ κεκτησθαι, οὐκ ἐθέλουσιν εἶργειν νόμῳ τῶν νέων ἔσοι ἂν ἀκόλαστοι γίγνωνται; μὴ ἐξεῖναι αὐτοῖς ἀναλίσκειν τε καὶ εισδανείζοντες ἔτι πλουσιώτεροί τε καὶ εντιμότεροι γίγνωνται. Παντός γε μᾶλλον.

"Now, what does it mean?" Lucian asked.

"Well, let's see what you make of it." Tristram translated slowly:—

"*'Well, said I, is it not in this way that the change arises from oligarchy into democracy?—they are insatiable'—greedy—'of wealth which they propose to themselves as their end: and the rulers, who know very well that their own power is based on property, refuse to prevent'—curtail—'by law the extravagance of the spendthrift youth because by their ruin they'—the rulers, you know—'will gain; they lend them money, and buy their land away from them, and increase in wealth and honour?*

"*'Exactly.*

"*'There can be no doubt that in a state you cannot have in the citizens the love of wealth and the spirit of moderation; one or the other will have to be disregarded.*

"*'That is tolerably clear.*

"*'And in oligarchical states, from carelessness and the indulgence of their extravagance, men of good family have often been reduced to beggary.*

“ ‘ Yes, often.

“ ‘ *And nevertheless they continue to remain in the city; there they are, and they have stings and arms, and some owe money, and some are no longer citizens: there is a third class who are in both predicaments* ’—that is, owing money, and also being no longer citizens, you know.” Lucian nodded. — “ ‘ *And these hate and conspire against those who have obtained their property, and hate and conspire against anybody else, and are eager for revolution.*

“ ‘ That is true.

“ ‘ *On the other hand, the business men, stooping as they walk, and pretending not to see the people whom they have already ruined, insert the sting* ’—their money, that is—‘ *into any one who is not on guard against them, and get back the parent or principal sum many times over multiplied into a family of children—*’ ”

“ How? ” asked Cyrus,—“ children? I thought it was money? ”

“ Oh, wait till he stops,” said Lucian. “ Cents are dollars’ children, he means.”

“ ‘ *This is the way in which they cause the drone and the pauper to abound in the state.*

“ ‘ Yes, he said, there are plenty of them, that is certain.

“ ‘ *The evil is like a fire that is blazing up, and that they will not put out either by placing restriction on the disposition of property or—*’ ”

“ It is people talking,” said Lucian.

“ Good for you! ” said Tristram. “ Yes; it is a dialogue of Plato.”

“ Plato! ” exclaimed Lucian, bending over the book.

“ Is he an immigrant? ” I asked.

"Immigrant?" said Tristram.

"Because he doesn't write in English."

"How could he write in English?" cried Lucian.

"English was not yet invented."

I looked from Lucian to Tristram in baffled silence.

"You thought he was alive!" exclaimed Tristram.

"You thought——"

"But he is talking about alive things," said I.

"American things. He couldn't be dead very long."

"Not very," Tristram admitted. "Something over two thousand years."

Lucian shouted joyously.

"Do you suppose it is that way that grandfather made our money?" inquired Cyrus. "By lending them money and buying out their land?"

Tristram looked embarrassed.

"It was in Greece. Do you not understand?" explained Lucian.

"Oh!" said Cyrus and I.

"But it is the same as American," I insisted.

"Uncle Lew and father used to talk like that about American millionaires."

"Tell about it!" Lucian clamoured. "What is its name? What are they saying? How shall we understand until we shall know the beginning? Stop guessing, Clara, and let him talk!"

We all three fixed our unwinking, limpet-like attention upon this wise young man; and he, looking off through the screening trees to the river, told us the book's name—*The Republic*; told us of Socrates and his queer casual way of coaxing the Athenians to school; of Plato, the prize scholar, the wide-browed man.

Then I fell a-musing on Tristram's steep brow, on his long greyhound face, on the pale brown of his hair, the pale grey of his flannel shirt, the pale blue of his necktie, all of which details gave me a dreamy personal pleasure unlike anything I had ever felt before. He had asked me to call him Tristram!

"Like Clara's colony," Lucian was saying, "except that Socrates is only talking, but at New Hope they live it."

I picked up the threads of the discourse as best I could. This republic, it seemed, was Socrates' dream of an ideal commonwealth. The word was familiar to me and quickened my attention. Uncle Lew meant New Hope to be an ideal commonwealth. But there, it was soon evident, the resemblance between Uncle Lew and Socrates ended. There were to be no jacks-of-all-trades in Socrates' colony. He would never have allowed Brother Barton to build the kitchen chimney. And yet somebody had to build the chimney.

"Slaves!" we all three exclaimed in horror.

"Not in ours," said Cyrus.

Our good opinion of Plato was sadly modified.

"There will always be slaves," Tristram announced definitely, looking from one to another of us with his amused smile.

"You forget!" cried Cyrus. "The Civil War. Clara's grandfather fought and died to free the slaves. He was our great-uncle."

"Yet there are still slaves in America, Uncle Lew says," said I. "All working people will be slaves more and more until we get rid of competition."

"You too are a slave, Miss Clara," Tristram said,

smiling. "A slave to an idea. I am a slave"—he turned his head and looked toward the mountains.

"To what?" asked Lucian.

"To a mood—to a passion—to an idea—I have many chains."

We sat and looked at him, and groped in silence among these abstruse thoughts.

"Until philosophers are kings and kings are philosophers," said he, "cities will never cease from ill. As the man is, so the state must be."

We considered this also.

"Then if the man is a poet the state is a poem," cried Lucian suddenly, and laughed with delight.

Tristram chuckled, and remarked that it was a pity Lucian could not have said that to Socrates.

Socrates, it would appear, had no use for poets; they and their poetry were to be banished from his commonwealth.

Lucian was aghast, indignant. "No Dante!" he cried. "No——"

"Is yours going to be that kind—with slaves?" Cyrus asked Tristram.

"Why? Won't you vote for me?" Tristram laughed.

"No!" the boys shouted.

"And Miss Clara?" said Tristram.

"In that kind of government the women don't have any vote, you told us," I answered.

Then we heard Helen calling—"Clara! Here's somebody to see you."

And we got up and went away, followed by Tristram's laughter.

III

There was a boy with Helen, and my heart sank when I saw him. He had a rustic picture-frame in his hand.

"How do you do?" he said. "You're some later'n we are gettin' in your hay."

"How do you do?" said we three in solemn chorus.

"Here's your frame," he continued. "But there's no charge. I'm goin' to give it to you."

"Oh, no!" I whispered.

"You can show it to people, you know, and get them to give me orders."

"Oh, no!" I repeated.

Cuthbert turned to Lucian. "Twenty-five cents," he said. "Don't you want me to make you one to put her picture in?"

"I do!" said Cyrus. "But must it be so sticky?"

"It lasts longer," explained Cuthbert. "But then you could always afford a new one."

"This is that boy," I said to Lucian.

My Cousin Pauline, again with her rake over her shoulder, had come to where we stood, by the hay cart.

"He is a friend of grandfather's," explained Lucian. "He has come to call. Clara knows him."

"And he sells these picture-frames to earn money to go through college," said Cyrus.

My Cousin Pauline examined the frame and handed it to Nicholas with eyebrows uplifted in mock horror. Cuthbert was looking at her with intelligent comprehension, but no sign of embarrassment.

"I'd be glad to help you with your hay, if you're short-handed," he remarked.

And she called him a "true neighbour," patting him on the shoulder. Those intent eyes of his searched her face with impersonal curiosity.

"And I am sure you will know more about hay-making than any of us," she added, turning from him with the little movement of dismissal she involuntarily used when annoyed.

"Well, I wouldn't wonder if I did," he acquiesced. "Shall I take this fork?" And before any one could reply, he had tossed half a haycock into the bottom of the cart.

"Now we are getting down to business," said Nicholas, climbing into the cart and spreading the hay. "They ought to have this young man at New Hope to show them how, oughtn't they, Clara?"

"He'll expect to be paid," murmured Helen in my ear.

"He doesn't want to be paid for the frame."

"I hate that kind of boy."

"Why, Helen!" I exclaimed. "He is so practical, I thought you would like him. He reminds me a little of you."

Helen looked as if she could have murdered me. Then turned her back. When I put my arm around her and looked into her face I saw there were tears in her eyes.

"Go away!" she said. But I clung to her.

"I mean——"

"Go away!"

And I went, sadly, around to the other side of the cart, where Cyrus was insisting upon wielding a

pitchfork to the peril of any one who came within a radius of five feet of him.

"Am I too little, Clara?—Am I?" he expostulated, staggering toward the wagon, his fork dripping hay.

"But the fork is so big, Cyrus."

"Well, I cannot help that, can I?"

He shook the few remaining wisps into the wagon and started back for another bundle.

"He only trails it all over the place," protested Lucian.

"I shall learn," Cyrus said. And he might have if the afternoon had been long enough; but when our farmer called out, "Last load to-day!—How many's comin'? You, Helen?—Cyrus—comin'?" Cyrus was still in the ranks of unskilled labour.

He and Helen scrambled upon the load and went off to the barn. The grown people had long since retired to the shade. Lucian and I plumped into the middle of twin haycocks. Cuthbert remained standing, between us, chewing a wisp of hay.

"I guess I'll go home now," he suggested, "it's quite a walk. You don't happen to have an old algebray you'd be willin' to lend me?—I'd put a cover on it to keep it clean."

We were much impressed.

"I am to have one when I go to school," said Lucian, "and I'll get mamma to send for two."

"A new one?" Cuthbert drew a long breath. No word of thanks escaped him, but the satisfaction in his eyes was unmistakable.

"Say," he said after a moment, "did she tell you about that day on the mountain?"

Lucian nodded.

"And the way she tried to stuff me about everybody bein' as rich as everybody else, sometime?—Do you believe that?"

"It ought to be," said Lucian.

"It will be," said I. "My Uncle Lew, down South, is making it be, as fast as he can."

"Why ought it?" asked Cuthbert, ignoring me.

"Because—" began Lucian, pondering. "Do you think anybody ought to be as poor—as you are?"

"You bet I don't!"

"Then why don't you think everybody ought to be as rich as—well, as we are?"

Cuthbert was plainly disconcerted. He frowned, studying us. "But she says she *wants* to be poor."

"But don't you see," I cried, "if everybody is the same, there won't be rich and poor. That's what Uncle Lew says."

The children in the rural districts of New England no longer quote Scripture, else Cuthbert might have retorted that we have the poor with us always. As it was, he could only look at me and say—"Well, your grandfather was a mighty smart man, but he never talked that way. He looked out for number one." Then he turned and went to the upper gateway.

"Come again!" called Lucian.

"Yes, I will.—For the algebray."

IV

"Shall we go back to the grown-ups now?" said Lucian. "You see if they are not talking about

Tolstoy and economic soundness. I wonder why grown people think it worth while to go on talking round and round for hours, without saying anything?—If they are men and women, I mean. If they are only men they get it said. You listen to Tristram and Nicholas talking—and then you listen to them talking to mother.”

“Sometimes Cousin Pauline talks as if she would really go to live at New Hope.—Do you think she would?” I asked.

“Why, no!”

“But then——”

“She thinks she would, of course.”

My Cousin Pauline and the marchese were strolling toward us across the meadow. She sometimes walked a bit of the way to the village with him, when he went before dark.

“Lucian dearest,” she called, “come and get the mail-bag. There is something in it for Clara.”

He brought the bag to my haycock. “It’s quite heavy,” he said, and dove into it, bringing out a letter and a parcel. “Both for you.”

The letter was from Uncle Lew, and I had not heard from him for several weeks. I tore off the end of the envelope in a happy flutter.

“It feels like books,” Lucian said, busy with the string of the parcel. “I’ll open it for you.”

I remember I hugged the letter to me for the briefest moment; and the rim of the sun and the rim of a western hill kissed; and little sharp black pine tree-tops began to prick up, up, into the sun. And at first, when I turned to the letter, I could not read because of the dazzle in my eyes.

“MY LITTLE CLARA,”—Uncle Lew began,—“This is a sad letter for a little girl, and if I were coming north I would wait and tell you instead of writing—but when I leave here I go west.

“Your Aunt Camilla died three days ago of malignant typhoid. She was only sick a week. She was worn out with nursing the other people, and there was no power of resistance left. I ought never to have brought her here. She was too frail for this hard life. But she is taken away now, out of reach of my stupidity, my selfishness, and I am never to be allowed to make her suffer hardship any more. Give thanks for that when you say your prayers, little Clara; and some day when I am used to missing her, I will give thanks too.

“The mortgage was foreclosed the day she died. I have known for a long time that it must come, and when Baldwin drew out I knew it was only a question of weeks. But with all these sick folks there was nothing to do but hang on and hope. There are only ten of us here now—strays and homeless, mostly—three of them widows, and five children, and a feeble-minded boy who came here with his mother after you left, and Grandpa Pugh. Poor old man!—think of his weathering the epidemic!—and his daughter and my wife both gone! But that’s the way of it. There’s nothing for him but an institution, that I can see; but it’ll break his heart. Perhaps it might as well. He’s very bitter against me, but then he’s been almost childish since his daughter died. As soon as I get them all placed, and money to pay their railroad fares, I go west to work on a salary in a big manufacturing plant where, as far

as I understand it, I'm to be a sort of go-between, adjusting things between the men and the employer. Social Secretary they call it. It's a new philanthropic industrial dodge to keep the men quiet, as far as I can see. There is some talk of profit-sharing. Judge Acton got me the job, and for his sake I mean to give it a try. But I never was one for half measures.

"You mustn't take this too hard, my little girl. I guess we'll have to make up our minds that this sort of separatist experiment can never be the way out. We won't try to start another, you and I; not yet awhile. But if it was to do over again—even with all I know—I suppose I would. I believe it was the thing to do, when I did it; and I believe your Aunt Camilla would say so too. All the time she was delirious she kept saying over and over—'Never you mind, Lew; we'll stick it out. Never you mind, Lew; we'll stick it out.' She was a brave woman, and a saint, and a martyr. She didn't know me after the first day. It was the worst case we had.

"Some day I'm going to answer your dear little letters, but I can't now. You will write to Uncle Lew, won't you, when he is way out west? You're the one real bright spot in my life now, little Clara, and you must be a good girl and not fret over all this. Every stick and stone that can be sold off the place is being sold, but I came across the *Life of Robert Owen* among some books this morning and I'm sending it to you. I've written your name in it.

"They're going to sell the very lumber the houses are made of, and cart it off to build tenements for cotton operatives in the mill village south of here. Even the old plantation house is to be torn down.

But there will still be houses left; narrow houses. I have set a wooden cross above your Aunt Camilla's grave.

"Now, dearie, I'll write you my new address when I get there. And you mustn't think very much about these things. If you and those two boys are going to college you've got your work cut out for you for a few years. And when you get your chance to reform the world, you want to be good and ready for it, you know. I wasn't.

"I kissed your Aunt Camilla for you. She didn't know me after the first day. If only she might have.—Always your devoted UNCLE LEW."

I remember a thin thread of moon that hurried down the sky after the sun had gone. I remember a little bright cloud that filmed and frayed away. I remember the slow dusking of the meadow, and the soft whispering of the twilight sounds.

When there was no longer light enough to read by, Lucian sighed, and looked up from the *Autobiography of Robert Owen*.

"What a nice book!" he said. "Let us write our autobiographies when we grow up."

Something made a queer noise. I remember I thought it sounded like a puppy's whine.

Lucian got to his knees and peered at me and said, "Clara!" with a little note of fright in his voice. But I had sat so very still so long, that I kept on sitting still.

"Are you asleep, sitting up like that?" he asked me fearfully; and putting up his hand he touched mine.

I suppose it was cold, for he gave a sharp scream and flung himself upon me, crying—"Clara, Clara! are you dead?—No!—No!—No!—No!—" and squeezing me tight, and kissing me violently.

And a voice that never was mine, a very high, thin, sharp little voice, said—"Everything is dead. Aunt Camilla is dead. The colony is dead. The autobiography is dead—" And then terrible, coughing, sobbing sounds came tearing up into my throat.

"No!—No!—No!—" Lucian shouted, as if he were trying to drown those other sounds.

I remember how wet his cheek was against mine. I remember I thought, "Lucian is crying." And then I, too, was crying, the ordinary way, with tears.

CHAPTER IV

EPISTOLARY AND POETICAL

I WANTED Lucian to write these memories. I wanted him to make another *Prelude*, that should do for the beginning of the twentieth century what Wordsworth's did for the beginning of the nineteenth—reveal the spirit of the century's youth, its hope and its despair, its failure, its triumph, if there be any triumph. I had a dream of the immortal thing as he must write it—in blank verse, nobly; not Wordsworth's blank verse, meditative, reflective, processional, but Lucian's own: rippling like a brook; rioting like a torrent, booming like a thunder-clap; technically nearer the verse of Elizabethan Fletcher than any I know; swift, flexible, with its lines running over, its feminine endings, its syllables in a hurry—yet always within bounds, always obedient to the norm.

But Lucian laughs and will not. He says blank verse is not the inevitable, revealing medium of the things of the spirit. He says you may put a bird in a cage, but you cannot make him sing. He asks how he is to retire to Nature's bosom to be comforted when the fifty feet by thirty-six of that bosom allotted to him for his daily hour of exercise is armoured four inches thick with patent concrete. But he does sing, for now and again there comes a song across the sea to me. And to listen to the songs you would think

it was I that was the caged bird, not he. Never was there so blithe a captive.

"I doubt if even St. Paul could give me points on rejoicing in bonds," his yesterday's letter said. "I have just finished a corking article on the minimum wage; and now I meditate sending it down to the sea in a car load of bottles, *à la* Shelley. I doubt if our method of dissemination is any more effective than his. How do you get on with the autobiography? Your last sheets came yesterday—about you and me in the hayfield. I'm not a good critic because the whole thing is so personal to both of us, but I have a suspicion it's readable. I wish you weren't so set against printing. Why?—I suppose it's my artistically temperamental immodesty that makes me look at all life as incipient literature. You say you can't because of the part that Tristram Lawrence played. But doesn't every one know he played it—every one, that is, who knows our little circle? And as for the people who don't know—who never heard of us, or him—keep the manuscript five years and change all our names, and you'll find it won't raise a ripple. Of course, I should not want you to print anything that could have a *succès de scandale*; but our little fracas really didn't make much of a stir, except locally. I wish it had made more, for the Cause's sake.—I don't want to overpersuade you, dear; but I hate to think of all that good writing lying in a trunk. Who can count on the literary acumen of grandchildren (great-grandchildren, I observe you say). Suppose they burned it up unread?—I should certainly turn in my cinerary urn."

Farther on he says—"I am interested to see how you'll manage the 'fair seed time' of our souls. I wouldn't linger too long over that part, if I were you. Grow us up and set us going. As I look back it seems as if all of my own life that is worth anything were packed into this last fiery year."

But why should not I be compiling statistics on the minimum wage? Better I than Lucian—I who write only prose. This is a very self-conscious, unfruitful sort of thing to do—this family biography. For whom? If I were seventy, and at the end of things, there might be some excuse for writing memoirs. But now?

I said something like that to Lucian the day before I sailed; and—

"What Cyrus has done will hardly repeat itself in our family history," he said. "Neither you nor I is likely to have his opportunity, or to meet it better than he did. There is no bettering what is so well done. Some things you and I would not forget."

"If I lived to be five hundred, do you think I could forget them?" I asked him.

But he said—"So few of us live to be five hundred, how can we tell? And some of us do not even live to be seventy. Write it now!"

Now—is June in Umbria after three months of rain. *Umbria verde*, the peasants say, speaking in proverbs, peasant fashion; and there are indeed green patches among these treeless Apennines; our little "hill of vines" shimmers like an emerald under the Italian sun. But proverbs notwithstanding, the

dominant note is amethyst. From dawn and sunrise till sunset and the afterglow I have watched its purple variants play upon these transparent, visionary mountains.

Now—is waiting time for me. On the threshold of our youth I wait—Lucian's and Cyrus's and mine—for the passing of a year and a day. After that, no more looking back, unless at seventy.

II

We were a long time getting ready to live. Events enough, of a sort, there were, in those ten years and more of school and college: preliminaries, finals, proms, vacations, initiations, ball games; to all of which we gave a serious, undergraduate attention. And there were the marchese's unexpected two years of mysterious disappearance amid the mountain fastnesses of South America, and the romance of his unexpected return when my Cousin Pauline had almost made up her mind to be consoled by Nicholas. And there was the belated wedding—not with Nicholas. And yet, as I read over the letters we wrote in those years, I am chiefly impressed by the way in which our minds were taken up with other matters.

Among the letters of 1894, when we were all three at boarding school and Lucian was not yet sixteen, I find these two which are sufficiently characteristic. I give them in order. Cyrus's must have followed Lucian's after a week or ten days. Both boys are careless about dating.

“DEAR CLARA,—Thanks for letting me see Uncle Lew’s letter about the Pullman strike. Do you mind if I keep it a day or two longer? I want to copy some of the things he says about the right to organise, so as to have them pat when the fellows jump on me. I read it the other night at a meeting of our Frat. and it bowled them over completely, so that they stayed bowled for as much as thirty-six hours. We started a subscription that night and had it all planned to send so much a week to the relief fund. And then somehow dear Trissy got wind of it and sent for me to his room and indulged in his sarcastic pleasantries about misplaced enthusiasm. Now don’t tell me he’s clever, Clara. I know he’s clever, and I know you’re fond of him. Yes, you are! But that’s no reason why I should be fond of him, and I’m not. Neither am I the only one that’s glad his superior talents are to be transferred to a loftier plane of intellectual activity. I’d rather he’d run a magazine than run me. He wanted me to call off the subscription. Me!—And then his academic conscience obliged him to go to the Head and give the whole show away. And the Head sent for me and explained that some of the boys’ fathers are railroad men, or have stock, and all that; and boys can’t do a thing of this kind without their fathers’ permission and without consulting people who understand the situation better than we can who are not in it. And he talked to the school in chapel, cooing over us because we meant well.

“Of course the fellows were red hot at first for being meddled with, and a good many of them wrote off to their fathers. And I wish you could read the

rotten stuff their fathers wrote. All about the wicked ingratitude of the Pullman operatives, and the need to guard the sacred right of the individual to work at what wages he chooses. But it caught the fellows; and besides, they couldn't give money if their fathers said not. And now we do nothing but argue.

"It makes me wish more than ever that I were Uncle Lew; free to tramp with Coxie's army, and to picket with strikers, and to do all those exciting things, and to be one of those men who are suffering for a cause. For Uncle Lew does suffer, and what a good time he has doing it!

"There's a thing of Matthew Arnold's I'm learning, for fun, that expresses my feeling:—

" 'Faster, faster,
O Circe, Goddess,
Let the wild thronging train,
The bright procession
Of eddying forms,
Sweep through my soul!'

I've just got hold of Matthew Arnold. You must read him. Trissy had a copy on his table the other night. I was dipping into it, turning the pages while he was rowing me about the strike.

" 'There's a warning for you,' says Trissy, really solemn for once. 'There's a man who was a poet, but he turned away from his high calling. He let the weeds of criticism choke the fountain of his inspiration.'

" 'It must have been a pretty feeble trickle,' I said. And he took the book and read me some things. You know how well he reads, in that half-suppressed voice

of his. — ‘The Forsaken Merman’ — ‘Progress’ —
‘Rugby Chapel.’

“Listen:—

“ ‘And there are some, whom a thirst
Ardent, unquenchable, fires,
Not with the crowd to be spent,
Not without aim to go round
In an eddy of purposeless dust,
Effort unmeaning and vain.
Ah yes! some of us strive
Not without action to die
Fruitless, but something to snatch
From dull oblivion, nor all
Glut the devouring grave!’

But it seems to me one may be spent with the crowd
and yet have an aim.

“Old Trissy says economics are alien to my
temperament. You bet they are! I picked up a
book by somebody named Marshall, on the Head’s
study table the other day, and it was almost the
only book I ever struck that I couldn’t read. But
then Trissy calls the Pullman strike economics. I
call it Life; and I told him so. Matthew Arnold
says:—

“ ‘Such a price
The Gods exact for song,
To become what we sing.’—

He paid his price. I wonder what my price will
be?—The song? Lights out!— LUCIAN.”

I remember thinking that I would send this letter
to Uncle Lew; and then not sending it, because of

that little remark about my own attitude toward Tristram.

Cyrus's letter I did send him.

"DEAR CLARA,—I must tell you about our vaudeville show. Lucian was the best. I suppose I ought not to say it because he is my brother, but he is always the best. He recited a thing called 'The Strayed Reveller,' by Matthew Arnold. I wish you had been here. He had on one of the pillow-cases from the school guest chamber, you remember how enormous they are, and girdled in with his bathrobe tassels, and over his shoulder that little grey fox-skin rug with the red flannel scallops round the edges that we bought from the taxidermatologist up home in our valley, and one of the pink silk union suits mother bought him the last time we were in Geneva and he never wears. And he had a green wreath in his hair, and raspberry shrub in a Tiffany vase from the reception-room mantelpiece. The fellows all yelled when they saw him, they thought he was going to be funny. But he had them hypnotised all right, in about two minutes. And when it was over the housekeeper never said a word about the pillow-case. All she said was, 'Do not attempt to wash the Tiffany vase, Lucian, I will do that.' And the Head shook hands with him and beamed like the sun.

"I would have liked to be in the vaudeville show, but the boys are down on me just now because I didn't subscribe anything to our spring games nor to the set of encyclopædias we—I mean they—are giving to old Trissy because he is leaving to be an

editor. You see, I have sent all my allowance to the Pullman Strikers' Relief Fund. I felt that they needed it more than Trissy because he can always go to a public library if he wants to consult an encyclopædia. But the boys think I am a skunk because Trissy is a friend of mother's and has always taken a particular interest in Lucian and me. But they are madder about the athletics. I am sorry they are mad; but I seemed to have to send the money. I sent it anomalously, from 'A Sympathiser,' because I was afraid if I signed my name Mr. Warner and those other old gentlemen that take care of grandfather's money for us might take it away from the strikers because I am a minor. They can't now.

"The worst of it is that Lucian has given one boy a black eye about it, and the boy tells people—masters, I mean,—that he ran into his brass bed-post in the dark. But they might know, if they stopped to think, that if he ran into the bed-post it would hit him in the stomach.

"It worries me a good deal to be responsible for other people's sins. Sometimes at night it seems as if I could not bear it. But if I went and told, I should be even more of a skunk than I am now. Life is so complicated. I think a hermit's life is the safest, because he lives by himself and cannot tempt other people to lie and fight.

"I am glad the vacation is so near.—Your aff.

"CYRUS."

III

Helen and I saw little of each other while we were preparing for college. She entered two years ahead of me, from a high school; and in the summer her practical sister secured some sort of paying employment for her, and we were always in Europe. The summer before she entered college I pleaded with her to come with us, but she would not. She waited on table at a fashionable hotel in the White Mountains instead. My Cousin Pauline was horrified, but I remember how Lucian and Cyrus and I, walking with the marchese over the Col du Géant from Courmayeur to Chamonix, clanked our chains and railed at the cruel fate that denied us the romantic excitement of Helen's life.

Helen was never a good correspondent, but during the two years before I joined her at college she wrote once a week, if only a line. The frequency of these letters at first delighted, then puzzled, then distressed me, and at last I wrote her some sort of blundering protest, which brought me by return mail this reply, the nearest to a love-letter I ever had from Helen:—

“How silly you are, Clara!—Duty!—What duty?—Obligation to write you?—If I thought so, do you think I would? There is an obligation—to pay back my college bills after I've swallowed the college education; and I shall. But what has that to do with my writing letters to my dearest friend? Yes; my Dearest Friend. Let us write it in large capitals. Why can't you believe it? I'm not so modest as

not to know I'm not your dearest friend. (Dear me, isn't there a not too many there?) And do you think it is only hard lines for you that you are not in college now? Perhaps I am not very fond of writing letters; I don't write as easily as you do. I keep all your letters, Clara. There!—now do you believe you are? And I only keep the letters of one other person, and they are not from a girl, and I haven't but four of them so far, anyway.

“Of course, if you don't want me to write you once a week, I won't.—But I shall miss it.—With love always,
HELEN.”

The next was on a different theme and in a different vein.

“DEAR CLARA,—How exasperating you can be! Of course I shall not let you subscribe to the College Settlements Association under my name. If I can't write you about associations and dues and things without your always wanting to interfere, I shan't tell you anything; that's all. If you want to subscribe to it you can form a sub-chapter in your school. I shall pay my own subscription, thank you, and supply myself with any other luxuries I choose, by putting the braid on other girls' skirts and shampooing their hair.

“If you have a chance, get them to take you in to see the settlement house. I spent last Sunday there. If I can save up enough I may go there for the spring vacation. Now, Clara Emery, if you offer to pay, or lend me, my board for the spring vacation, because you would like to be at the settlement then,

and can't, I won't write you another letter this semester.

"Why in the world should you suppose I am keeping Lucian's letters? In the first place, he never writes me; and in the second place, if he did I should send his letters to you to keep. I do hear from Cyrus once in a long while, when he wants to consult me about a birthday present for you, or something of that kind. I do think you might write oftener to Cyrus, Clara.—Yours,

HELEN."

IV

I have been turning over Lucian's early manuscript poems this morning. The best of them are in the little volume that came out after he left college, but some that I am fondest of he rejected for one reason or another. I am not the only one in the family who has literary reserves. The little lauds of our Franciscan summer are here—to Sister Cassock and the trees. I said them just now, on the loggia, looking off to the shadowy ridge of La Verna, the mountain of the Stigmata, the only tree-crowned summit in all our circle of bare, sunbright Apennines.

And among these boyish attempts at verse-making I have found also a letter that I had mislaid—the one he wrote me in the winter before he went to college—all about his epic. It was written during the mid-year examinations, although they apparently were not weighing upon his mind.

"DEAR CLARA,—I have not written you for some time because I have been busy on an epic I am

writing. It is my first really serious attempt at blank verse and I am rather absorbed. What do you think of this for a beginning?

“ ‘The century is going to its death.
The feast is over and the guests are sped,
Or sitting heavily about the board,
Dull-eyed and moody, loth to leave their cates,
Though appetite be sickened to a stare.

“ ‘To stand upon the feast-hall’s threshold stone,
And keen with hunger, hope, and youth, and life,
Be bidden to a banquet that is ended,—
What does it mean?’—

Do you catch the idea? It is to be in the nature of a dirge—a reviewing of the life of the century that is going out and a prophecy of what is to come. Of course, we have several years to run yet, but by the time I finish—with all the interruptions I shall have from getting settled at college and used to the new routine—there ought to be just about time to see it through the press before we ring in 1900. And if I can get it out before 1900, it will have all the more time to make its way.

“I plan for about ten thousand lines. What do you think of ‘A Prophet in the Wilderness’ for a title? Here’s another bit; of course you know most of this is only trial stuff, but there’s a line here and there that I mean to keep:—

“ ‘O Son of Time! O prostrate century
So soon to die, so soon to be at rest
Within the dim, still crypt of Memory
Where, side by side, thy hoary brothers sleep!’

Do you prefer memory without the capital letter? There is still a monotony about the way my emphasis

falls, but I shall work out of that when I get into the swing of the verse. There is to be one section about the nineteenth-century poets and thinkers. Guess which one this is:—

“—‘ that other youth
Whose words were very stars he flung athwart
The cumulative darkness of your thought? ’

And then there is going to be a vision of a golden image—I haven’t worked it out yet—and the immigrant hordes pouring up over the edge of the world, and the priests of the image stripping them of all their little wealth, and grinding them to labour, and hoarding the gold for the image; and everybody being dashed to foam and death, like an angry sea about the pedestal of the image. I know it’s confused now, but you’ll see what I mean. And then after the vision the prophet turns and denounces his hearers:—

“ ‘ How cautious and how careful for God’s world,
His world, He guardeth, are we grown of late!
“ Not war! ” ye whimper. “ War? to lay in waste
Our golden wheat-fields, steep our land in blood,
Our peaceful land? Bring famine on the earth?
The world is grown too wise to go to war.”

“ ‘ Bring famine on the land?—What men are these
That sit within our gates and beg for bread?
Lay waste our golden wheat-fields?—Aye, lay waste
And trample them. Of what do these avail
If they that sow the seed must reap to starve?

“ ‘ Unlock your coffers! Cast them out of doors,
And cease this whining, soft benevolence.
Spit out the yellow poison from your souls! ’

I’m fond of that last line. If I didn’t have those

wretched finals to think of in June I could do a lot this next term. And that reminds me, I suppose I ought to take a whack at Math. before I go to bed; all the other fellows are cramming for to-morrow; that's why I haven't been interrupted in this letter."

Some seven hundred lines of that visionary ten thousand were written. "'Prentice work," Lucian said, when he came to choose the poems for his book. And I acquiesced. But before I knew what he was about he had torn the manuscript and thrust it on the fire.

Looked at from the point of view of literature, I suppose it was no great loss; but I am glad I have found the letter with these fragments—now that he is trying to convert the world by statistics of child labour and the minimum wage.

V

In the spring of our freshman year, Lucian's and mine, war was declared with Spain; and it was in February or March—no, perhaps April—when the country was in a ferment and nothing was as yet officially settled, that Cyrus won the school debate. I remember how Helen pulled wires to try to get permission for her and me to go to it. But we should have had to cut three classes and spend the night in town, and there was a difficulty about a chaperone. We had to content ourselves with Lucian's telegram and the letter that followed in a day or two.

"Isn't it great about Cyrus?" he wrote. "I never was so proud of anything in my life. It was

a shame you couldn't be there. He was so disappointed. But he made that audience sit up. They never have half appreciated Cyrus at the school before. And the funny part of it was the coach's attitude beforehand. I ran down on the afternoon train and the coach was on it, and I introduced myself. I could see by the way he wriggled round that he hadn't a ghost of an idea Cyrus could do anything. 'You see, Mr. Emery,' he said, 'he's on the weak side of the argument anyway;—we are going to war with Spain, and we ought to go to war with Spain.' — 'I'm not so sure,' said I. — 'Well, you're the first college man I've met that doesn't think so,' he replied. And then he went on to say a good many nice things about the way Cyrus had worked up his case, but I knew I had got at the gist of the matter when he said—'If only your brother might be persuaded to put a little more animation into his delivery, but he has an aversion to letting out his voice. And when you're on the unpopular side of a live issue like this, oratorical bluff is your only chance. The boy that's with him appreciates that, and fortunately has some dramatic ability. But your brother is very obstinate.'

"Nevertheless, I wasn't wholly cast down. I knew my little brother. I will say, however, that I didn't think he could win; for it is a live issue, and almost every one is predisposed in favour of war. I didn't think he'd fetch them even if he did, personally, do well. But he did fetch them!

"He was at the station to meet me, his most dry and taciturn. He had the outline of his argument in his pocket and I read it as we walked up. 'Of course,

it convinces me,' I said, when I gave it back to him, 'but then I'm on your side.'

" 'And it's the right side, whether we lose or win—that's the only thing that matters,' he answered; and then, looking straight ahead, 'But I shall try to make them see it the way I do.'

" There was quite a choice lot of school alumni out to hear the debate. You know, we are a choice lot any way. I was the baby of the bunch, but I hobnobbed with a judge of the supreme court and a member of the cabinet and a bishop, all of them old boys and old debating club members. Even judges of the supreme court go out of the way to be nice to grandfather's grandsons.

" The affirmative opened well—good husky youths they were on that side, with cheerful aggressive voices, both of them; and the leader was a handsome fellow besides. Cyrus's partner followed the first affirmative, a cocky little chap, making the most of how improper, from a Christian, as well as from a diplomatic point of view it would be for us to lay ourselves open to the charge of revenging the destruction of the *Maine*—and not believing one word of his own argument. Then more affirmative—then Cyrus. I give you my word, I felt quite faint for a minute, and my forehead went cold and clammy. And there he stood, with his cowlick straying slantwise down his forehead. You never saw anything so lean and gawky and lovable in your life. He stood quite still, with his chin a little dropped, and those calm, attentive eyes of his going from face to face—that personal, friendly, simple way he has when he chooses. People settled into their chairs, and the

whole place became abnormally still: it was queer the way that quiet glance affected them. And then—you know how he used to preach to the birds—it was something like that. Of course, he wasn't talking in his ordinary voice, he couldn't have been, but the effect was of his ordinary voice, not lifted an atom.—He will send you his outline. He had the economic side of it well worked out—his great tactic was playing into the other side's hands—conceding and conceding—painting the commercial prosperity that followed a successful war (and of course this would be successful), and then suddenly turning and showing how it was a false prosperity. Painting the humanitarian impulses of the people and commending them—and then showing how the people were a set of sheep and fools at the mercy of high finance and politics and jingoism. I tell myself that of course it was only school-boy logic and must have been feeble, but somehow it didn't seem to be feeble at the time. But I think he was even better when it came to the rebuttal. He had sat there during those first speeches, and during the rather aimless reply to his own, making notes; and without cracking a smile he pricked the bombast of the other side, and the audience shouted again and again. And then he straightened up and held out his two hands, palm up, and began to talk Peace—and Tolstoy—and the Doukhobors—and all the ladies wept. And then he sat down.

"The boys simply went wild. They yelled for fifteen minutes—the school yell and then 'Emery!' There was no question about which side had won. I was sitting next the judge of the supreme court and he turned to me and said, 'How old is that boy?'

and when I told him not quite seventeen, he said, 'Well, sir; it is a very remarkable performance; a very remarkable performance indeed. He has a future before him.'

"I couldn't get near Cyrus for another hour, the Head had him in tow and was introducing him to the big bugs. I slept on the sofa in his study, and after we had turned the fellows out and were getting ready for bed I said something about the success. He came and stood close before me with his eyes fixed on mine, and said, 'Do you really think I changed any of their minds—or hearts?—because I don't. That would be success—nothing else.' I said, 'You're tired now, Cyrus—that's why.' 'Oh, no, it's not why,' he answered, and began to talk of something else. After the lights were out he remarked from the bedroom, 'It was very pleasant when I held them all in the hollow of my hand.'

"Write him, Clara; and say all you can to cheer him.

LUCIAN."

"P.S.—Who do you think has turned up?—Cuthbert. I always feel so apologetic when I see him wearing my old clothes that I never can refuse him anything. Not that he asks, but his whole attitude says — 'Stand and deliver.' Do you let him call you Clara? Not that he means to be impudent, but he irritates me."

My letter must have pleased Cyrus—although I cannot now remember what I said—for he answered quite exuberantly, for him.

"Oh, Clara! did it really mean so much to you? Thank you! I like your phrase 'bearing witness.'

I have been rather a blue pig since it was over; one does so want to persuade people to do differently. I suppose I am conceited and that is why it makes me grouchy not to get results. I think I was more disappointed than I ever have been about anything, not to have you there.

"There was an English priest visiting the school a couple of weeks ago, and he preached on detachment, and now every other word with the fellows is, 'Detach yourself, dear boy.' But seriously, it seems to me the difficulty is to know whether you are detached or just indifferent. I was feeling quite spiritually proud about being detached until I found you couldn't come to the debate.

"Cuthbert is around. He went to see Lucian at college, and then he came here, and I got permission to keep him over Sunday. He wanted to see what Lucian and I thought of the chances of his working his way through college. He thinks he can be ready by next autumn, when I enter. He would have been ready before Lucian, he says, if he hadn't missed so many pieces of school terms helping on the farm. But now his next brother is old enough to take his place.

"I am urging him to come. He wants to so much. It makes me uneasy to be going as a matter of course, when nothing in life is a matter of course with him—except drudgery. It would be dreadful to have to look at the world as if it were your enemy, to be got ahead of, to be beaten, to be downed—the way he does.

"Do write again soon. Now that Lucian isn't here I miss your letters. Or, I tell you what—

remind him to send me your letters sometimes, and then they will do for two, the way they used. I know how busy you must be.—Love from CYRUS."

"I bet you he pays that boy's way through college," said Helen, when I read her this letter.

"Well, why not?" said I.

Helen flushed suddenly. "Of course, why not? That was a nasty speech of mine considering, wasn't it?"

"Oh, Helen!" I protested.

"But then there is no more reason why Cuthbert Sylvester should look on the world as an enemy, to be downed, than that I should. But I don't.—You may think I do, Clara; but I don't—really."

"Think you do!" I cried.

"I think the world's an ugly place, a hard, cruel, selfish place. But I don't hate the world at all, nor want to beat it; I'm sorry for it. I'm not sorry for myself. How can I be when I have so much—college—and you—there, keep off!—But Cuthbert is sorry for himself.—And I am a piece of the world's ugliness when I judge him and say so. But I do say so. I have no use for Cuthbert."

"Well," I agreed reluctantly. "As Lucian would say, he is not exactly *simpatico*, but then——"

"He finds you very *simpatica*," she jeered mysteriously.

"How do you mean?"

"Oh, Cuthbert has his own little air castles."

"I don't know what you are talking about."

"And so you blush for your own stupidity?"

VI

I saw the boys fairly often when we were in college. One or the other came out every week, and after Helen was graduated I used to spend a good many Sundays at the settlement with her, and Cyrus was always there on Saturday nights with his Italian boys. Lucian's settlement class in the modern poets met in the middle of the week, but oftener than not he dropped in on a Sunday evening if I was there.

Those days of our first contact with the realities of want, and industrial suffering, were full of excitement and anguish for all of us. We took them hard. Even to me, who had known what it was to be poor, the sordid, malodorous, tenement house glut of filthy deprivation was then, and has never ceased to be, an unbearable nightmare of horror. The co-operative poverty of New Hope was a clean thing, well ventilated and voluntary, not to be mentioned in the same breath with the ugly apathy, the stertorous coma, of this other manifestation. I remember Lucian's saying desperately, "Would Shelley have gone on singing, do you think, if he had run up against this stench? It chokes me. And what's worse, they wouldn't hear me if I did sing; nothing vibrates in this dead atmosphere."

I was trying to follow Ruskin. Trying to clothe and feed and rightly please people; having my clothes made by needy seamstresses who could not cut and fit; wearing union label shoes that blistered my feet; experimenting in self-denials in order to probe the

limits of my efficiency and formulate a definition of luxury. But chiefly was I engaged in rebelling against our trustees, who would not let me endow the settlement, who would not let me adopt three Italian orphans, who would not let me set up an Irish widow in the grocery business, who would not let me build and finance a vacation house for working girls by the sea. There were other things, I know, that they would not let me do, but I have forgotten what they were. They did consent to my endowing a bed in the children's hospital, but only one bed.

Cyrus turned to the New Testament. His bank account was always over-drawn.

Cuthbert, too, I saw; not at the settlement, however. I think he suspected patronage there; and later he openly scorned all philanthropic endeavour. But he used to come out to college with rigid regularity, and sit on a sofa opposite me in awkward silence for an hour, between trains.

One memorable evening he said, "Do you remember that first day, how you said everybody ought to be as rich as everybody else?"

I nodded.

"Well, I'm taking a course on Socialism this semester. Maybe they ought. The fellow that's giving the course don't think so, though."

When I told Helen, to my disgust she said: "He's falling in love with you."

It is no use contradicting Helen.

Letter-writing was more or less fitful, yet my packet of college letters is by no means small, and choosing is not easy. If among those that follow Lucian's predominate, that is because I had more of

his to choose from. I seem, somehow, to have saved more of Lucian's.

The order of these letters is a little uncertain, as many of them are dated only by the day of the week, and in my college days I had the habit, disconcerting to the biographer, of destroying envelopes, to economise space.

"CLARA!—Have you seen the current *Atlantic*—'An Ode in Time of Hesitation?' Oh, the joy of being the fellow that wrote it!—Moody's his name. The real thing, he is! Do you suppose he'd fall down in a fit if I wrote and told him so? It seems as if I must; and yet I suppose I shan't; one never does. I want to hang round his neck. I want to weep tears of joy on his coat collar. Oh, Clara, is there really going to be a poet in America? If this ill wind of a war should blow us a poet!—Yours, LUCIAN."

"DEAR CLARA,—Have you seen old Trissy? He said he was going up to call. He's on for some sort of editorial spree. He looked me up and got me to show him what I was doing, and just to get a rise out of him I made him think that my heart was bound up in that dramatic plot I'm doing for English 43; you know—the one where the young woollen manufacturer goes to the Spanish war as a substitute for his Russian-Jew-naturalised foreman; and the Irish girl they both love marries the Russian Jew to preserve class consciousness; and the naturalised Spaniard, who is the night watchman of the mills, and shielded by the others because he's a deserter from the war and doesn't want to fight against his own

countrymen, gets drunk in honour of a Spanish victory and sets fire to the mills, and they all kill each other with rocks—You know.

“I explained to Trissy solemnly how the possibility of the play’s being accepted by a manager would all depend upon Spain’s winning out; otherwise the question was purely academic. And Trissy went for me tooth and nail, and then poured salt into my wounds. He says I am stultifying my genius. Mark you, *I* don’t say *genius*; Trissy says it.

“The only thing he had any use for was that little lyric I wrote for your last birthday. Virginal, he called it. He went off with it in his pocket, and to-day I got a cheque for it. Ten dollars! First fruits!

“Of course, I know that all I’ve got to do is to set to work and write erotic verse, and mother, and the marchese, and Trissy, and everybody, will immediately sigh content and think I am fulfilling my destiny. Shall you think I am fulfilling my destiny, Clara? Wouldn’t it make you proud to have me write erotic verse to you? Say the word! Or maybe you’d rather have it from Trissy—in quantitative metres?—Does Trissy ever? How many things are you concealing from me, Clara? Remember, I told you all about that pretty Irish girl in my poetry class at the settlement. Play fair!—She’s thrown me over, did you know?—For a man that deals in junk. There was my opportunity to write erotic verse, and I missed it. Too late, too late! Will you come with me to choose her wedding gift?

“I told Trissy I meant to sing the eight-hour day and the minimum wage in madrigals.—Thine,

“LUCIAN.”

"CLARA DEAR,—Don't you want to say a word in season to Cyrus? He may listen to you. His latest is vegetarianism, and I know he isn't getting enough to eat. Why stop at meat? Why isn't it just as murderous to masticate the sensitive little carrot?

"And don't you want to learn to knit, and make him a couple of neckties? He wouldn't give those away; and the ones he's wearing are the weediest. If a fellow chooses to be a Socialist and go without a necktie, I have nothing to say. I may come to it myself, yet. But if he's going to *wear* a necktie, let it *be* a necktie and not a shoestring.

"He never has any money to buy things. I'm sure I don't know what he does with it. But, yes—I suppose I do.—Distractedly, LUCIAN."

"DEAR CLARA,—Cyrus brought me your letter to read. How well you put it! Yes; the whole universe is our sacrament—and we in our turn are its sacrament. The little vegetable yields up its life to give me life;—but I in my turn am life-giving to the vegetable. I feed upon star-dust, to live; and I give my body in return to kindle the light of the stars. Those old pagans had hit upon a great mystery when they said: 'He that eateth the god, he becometh the god.' I suppose you couldn't go quite that far, being subject, by your own will, to the theological limitations of the Church of England. But I can go as far as I like, being religiously untrammelled, to Cyrus's great perturbation.

"But the important result at present is that you have, I think, overcome his difficulty about eating

meat. He still has a qualm; he is afraid he may be giving up his vegetarian principles because he likes to do what you ask him to. He's afraid he's too fond of you to be able to judge the question on its own merits. But he'll come round. Fortunately he has a mind. If he were *all* conscience what a time we should have with him.

"I was so full of your sacramental theory that I expounded it to Cuthbert just now when he came in to borrow Marx's *Capital*—and I don't usually open up my soul to Cuthbert.

"Do you know—it struck him as cannibalistic—grisly!—Aren't people queer? That's because he's such a rank materialist I suppose. He doesn't seem to me to find spirit in anything. He's always balancing, and over-balancing—material poverty against material riches. He finds in your theory an example of merciless competition—the big beasts eating up the little beasts. To me, it seems to signify co-operation—giving one's life—and all that life symbolises through flesh and blood—for the sake of the life of the world.

"I'll tell you something funny;—Cuthbert is beginning to pick flaws in competition. He's just the kind, with his personal grouch against the universe, to turn red-hot Marxian, if he does turn. Now it seems to me—though I say it with bated breath—that there are some fallacies in Marx;—not many, but some.

"Shall I send you my copy?—it's in the original German; I had hard work getting it. Cuthbert is using my incomplete English edition, just now.—
Yours,

LUCIAN."

"Rah! Rah! Rah! for the new editor!—or do they call you the editress? Enclosed please find my subscription, to be renewed as long as the present management endures. Shall you always have an editorial in every week? How does it feel, Clara? Does it remind you of the days when you used to lick the stamps for the *Message of New Hope*? I'll tell you one thing, yours has the reputation of being the best of the college periodicals from the women's colleges. At least I know that's what they think here. So now it's up to you.

"Won't Uncle Lew be pleased!—

"As for me—I tremble to think that I am to approach the editoressial presence next Sunday evening.

"I suppose you've written Trissy that he's not the only pebble.—Yours—puffed with pride,

"LUCIAN."

"P.S.—I've struck up with a Russian, a tremendous radical. His name (Englised, he explains) is Lazarus Samson. I'll bring him out some night."

"DEAR MISS EDITOR,—If you are seeking the timely, why not give us an editorial on Tainted Money? Such a topic from your pen would be especially *piquante*. I can think of nothing more likely to catch the eye of the public at present than an intercollegiate symposium on this perplexed question.—Faithfully yours,

"A CONSTANT READER."

"Good Heavens, Clara!—Talk about mental telepathy! You must have been mailing me that

inflammable copy of your paper just when I was dropping my little fool note into the post office. To think of your writing it! And yet, why not? Oh, bully for you! Bully! Bully! Do you think they will do anything about it? Temporary banishment? Perpetual exile? Thumbscrews on the hand that wields the pen? I wonder?

"What you say of the effect upon the undergraduate mind is so good. To expect us to attend classes in ethics and then not make the practical application! And then all their sophistries about not judging the individual, and nothing being proven. You were very clever to turn the issue away from the business men to the business methods. Nobody wants to hound individuals whose moral sense hasn't happened to keep pace with the times. But that's no reason we should take their money and glorify them. For we do glorify them. Talk about the corrupting of youth!

"Do you know what Cyrus has done? He's written to Mr. Warner and got a list of all the sources of our income. I tell you, they're putrid, some of them—nothing else expresses it. But as I say to Cyrus—what can we do as long as we are minors? He's in a terrible state about it. I don't believe he's sleeping at all. It affects my imagination, powerfully; but I sleep like a new-born babe. What is reality, Clara?

"Be sure you send me a ticket for a front seat, if they throw you to the lions. Oh, why won't somebody throw me to the lions? I do so long for the experience. You won't half appreciate it.—
Enviously,

LUCIAN."

In the same mail came this little note from Cyrus:—

“DEAR, DEAR CLARA,—What a brave thing to do! But will they expel you, do you think? It frightens me for you. But didn’t you find it a relief to do something? We are so chained. I can’t seem to bear it. I wrote Mr. Warner, asking him to sell out our interests in the southern mills and a lot of other things. But he won’t. And then I asked him to separate the dividends and only send me certain ones—and he says it is impossible. After that I went out over the bridge and emptied my pockets into the river. I had to do something. And the maddening thing is that the money is held in trust so long. If I thought I could get at it in two years it wouldn’t be so bad. But to have to wait until we’re twenty-five!

“Mother writes that qualities of good and evil cannot inhere in money. I am glad, for her sake, that she can look at it that way.—Yours,

“CYRUS.”

But there was no martyrdom, to Lucian’s disgust and my secret relief.

“You poor dear!” he wrote. “Of course they aren’t going to do anything to you. I knew they wouldn’t. What could they do? Expel you for having moral principles?—No; ignore!—That’s their little game. What else can they do? And already the papers have been switched on to a new interest. No, Clara; it would not have been pretty to martyrise you for holding the same opinion as a bishop and a few clergymen. Oh, what an opportunity for the Church!

If the Church would come out now, good and strong, and clean up house, and talk straight to its rich men, it could have me; and there are plenty more of my kind. If it would take a stand on Christian principles, and say, 'I won't have your dirty, bloody money, that you make by starving the souls and bodies of your brothers.' But it won't. Oh, no; it will go on time-serving and mammon-worshipping, the same old way. If I were in the Church, like you, perhaps I should stay in and try to leaven the lump. But I'm not in—and it's not my lump. No such sour dough for mine.

"I suppose you think that's blasphemy.

"LUCIAN."

"P.S.—Yes; I've given up my class at the settlement. To tell you the truth, Clara, I'm rather outgrowing settlements. They're a sort of dope, but they don't remove the cause of the industrial disease. Of course I shall keep up my subscription—for the present—if for nothing else, because I'm grateful for the way my settlement experience has opened up to me the genuine poverty of the poor. I doubt if I should have got at it in any other way. But one can't do everything, and I think I can put in my time better just now going to labour meetings—the real thing—than teaching shop-girls Shelley once a week."

"No, madam; you're mistaken. My ideas about the Church are my own, I don't take them second-hand from Lazarus Samson or any one else. And, Clara, I don't say this arrogantly, but I consider myself a member of that mystical body just as much as you. But I'm not a cog in a *machine* that is oiled

by commercial greed. I can't pin myself down, either; you mustn't expect me to. I believe in the immanence of God; I suppose I'm almost a Pantheist. But you needn't be afraid of Lazarus Samson. I couldn't be a materialist if I tried. I have tried; one tries everything, you know.

"And now, listen to this! It isn't as intelligibly to the point as prose editorials can be. Stick to prose, Clara! At least the world catches your meaning; it doesn't get the drift of economic thought that's couched in hexameters.

"What do you think of these?

Vigil

"Yea; on the morrow the children of light shall come forth to deliver!

Out of the dawn they shall ride. They shall sing; and the sound of their singing

Surely shall waken the sleepers and bring to confusion the slothful.

Surely shall stir up the strife we confess must be stirred to salvation:

Strife that we listen for, long for and shudder at, praying for respite;

Praying the hour may come quickly, and praying, faint-hearted, for patience;

And the words of the song shall be, 'Life! more abundantly life, and for all men!

Life! We do know! We have dreamed! And we waken to 'stablish the vision.'

"Death, where he sitteth asquat on the world, shall peer out to the sunrise,

Blink at the oncoming glory, and gibe at the high-hearted singers.

And the children of light shall not stint of their singing, nor tarry, nor falter.

Youth the eternal shall sit on their brows, and their eyes
shall be fearless;

Terribly swift shall they be, and serene, and unsmiling, but
joyous.

We of the vigil shall lift them the cup that we brewed in
the darkness.

Lo! they shall drink of our trembling, and unto them
strength shall be added;

Strength for the wielding of swords. And the morning
shall clamour with battle.

Life!—more abundantly life!—and for all men, for all
men, for all men!

“Cry of the conqueror! Miracle song that the peace-
makers carol!

Hark, how its rapture of prophecy sighs through the gloom
of the vigil!

And the children of light shall be slain in their strength
and their shining un wisdom.

Slain, with the dew of the morning undried on their hair
and their garments.

“I am afraid their lilt is rather rocking-horsey, but
such as they are you are welcome to them, O Child of
Light!—Thy sputtering candle, L. E.”

VII

The later letters, those written after Helen had
taken her degree and was earning her own living, are
all more or less uneasy in tone. We, too, must make
decisions presently. It was a haunting thought.
Helen and I could not keep away from it when we
were together.

I remember one day her saying: “No, of course
you don’t know what you want to be. You have

no incentive. You don't *have* to be *anything*. That's just the way it will be with everybody under Socialism; we shall die of inertia."

"You are very much mistaken," I retorted. "Under Socialism *everybody* will *have* to be something. But I don't see why you are always casting Socialism in my teeth. I'm not a Socialist; at least, Cuthbert says I'm not."

"Cuthbert!" with scorn. "Cuthbert will always be a brigand, under any economic dispensation."

"Cuthbert is deepening, Helen; even Lucian says so. Class-consciousness may be a dangerous thing, but it is helping Cuthbert to get out of himself."

"Into a bigger, more deluding kind of selfishness; yes."

"It needn't be selfishness."

"Oh, but your *bona fide* Socialist says it must be."

"Not if he takes Christianity into consideration."

"But then, he doesn't, you know."

"He'll have to."

Helen's silences could be even more exasperating than her repartee. I endured this one for perhaps three-quarters of a minute and then exclaimed:—

"Do you believe in anything, Helen?"

She smiled at me out of those mocking, steady eyes of hers, a smile that was neither yes nor no. Then she said, and there was a tentative note in the assertion—"I work."

"But without a plan?—Without a reason?—Without a hope?"

"Ah—hope!—that is an instinct."

"You can't simply hope in the abstract, Helen. And you know it is not incentive that I lack. But I

must see the meaning of the work I do; I must know the relation it bears to life."

"How will you know?" she asked.

"People do know. People are not all agnostic, like you. And when my work comes I shall know; just as I know——"

"The Apostles' Creed," she finished for me.

"For that matter, you know too," I resumed, ignoring her religious bait. "You do not simply work, you choose your work. Else why, when you could have had twelve hundred a year and your living, and all the luxuries of the season, teaching in a boarding-school, take six hundred and your living—and this?" This, was the unheated front attic of the Settlement House.

Helen went to her window and looked down. The street was full of push-carts and mud; of dirty screeching children, and pensive, bearded Jews.

"Why?" I repeated.

"I used to think one could get away from it," she said. "Do you remember, Clara, I tried to get away—when I was a little girl? But it follows. It follows."

Her eyes were on that shifting, sodden throng. "I'm more comfortable here; that's why. If I had a proper sense of pride I should be in that boarding-school, earning money to pay off my debt to you."

"Oh, Helen!"

"I should. As it is, you will have to wait twice as long. That's because I'm pauperised, like all the rest of these. I haven't a proper sense of responsibility." She paused. "What I can't make out is where the committee gets the money to pay an

assistant's salary." She had fixed her eyes upon me with disconcerting suddenness. "It doesn't appear."

"Doesn't it? How odd!" said I.

"What are you blushing for, Clara; the committee?"

"Am I blushing?—I should think any one would for the committee, considering the amount of work you do for that money. Lucian was talking about it the other night; he thinks it's starvation wages."

"Much he knows about starvation wages!"

"He and Cyrus wanted to write the committee and offer to make it larger"—Helen's eyes were startlingly fierce—"but I told them the head worker only had eight or nine hundred, and it wouldn't be decent for you to have more."

"I should think not. I don't see why my salary is any affair of theirs."

I had almost said, "It isn't," but instead I murmured, lowering my eyes, "It's just because they're interested."

VIII

Those were days in which Lucian's imagination played rather persistently around love. I suppose it was a part of his general restlessness. He was always writing lyrics to some new girl. But I never thought the lyrics very good. Girls liked him and invited him about a good deal; and his engagements often interfered with his coming to see me. Never, however, with his letters. Indeed, he wrote rather more frequently during his senior year than he had before. He seemed to be obliged to pour himself out to some one every time he discovered a new divinity;

and I was convenient and, I hope, sympathetic. But there is nothing very distinctive about those letters, and in looking them over I do not find any that seem to me worth including here, except this one in which he is concerned with no particular girl, but rather with love and matrimony in the abstract.

“DEAR CLARA,—When I came home from the Randalls’ dance last night I found Lazarus Samson in my rooms. He drops in often now, and I like to have him. It warms me to be near any one who so burns with reality at the core of him. But he is a queer duck. It was four o’clock this morning when we stopped talking. We talked of love. Probably because I had just come from sitting out two waltzes and a two-step with that wee crimson tippet flower, Daisy Randall. Not that we talked of her. Don’t imagine it. I should not think of talking of her with any one but you. By the way, Nicholas Richards was there, and I discovered that she had given him as many dances as she had me. I left early. Do you believe anything so small and dark and tenderly innocent and cosy could flirt? Perish the thought! But why in the world does an old fellow like that—over thirty a good deal—want to try to turn the head of a bud of eighteen? Of course she was flattered. I left before supper.

“Samson and I almost quarrelled, as it happened. He was holding forth about—well, to put it plainly, free love; and lumping in all that sort of rotten nonsense with Socialism; and finally I went for him. ‘Where’s your logic, man?’ I said to him. ‘If ever there were a system that insisted upon restraint,

and discipline, and law, as concomitants to liberty—or rather as inherent in liberty, and evolution—that system is Socialism; and yet you have the face to sit there and tell me that in the realm of the passions Socialism will permit lawlessness, licence—and more than permit—encourage? Call it anarchy, and I'll have nothing to say. It is anarchy; and we may come to anarchy in the millenium, when there's no marrying nor giving in marriage. But it's not Socialism; it has nothing to do with Socialism except where it affects the economic situation. And where it does not affect that situation it will be disciplined and law-bound, and there won't be any free love about it. It is not good for the economic situation, competitive or socialistic, for man to be running round indulging his soul or his body in indiscriminate lusts' (I hope you don't mind plain-speaking, Clara); 'it corrupts his will and bloats his ego. Socialism is the will to be selfless, if I understand it. Perhaps I don't understand it. Some day I may be a Socialist, who knows? Certainly I find it very alluring.' But then Cyrus comes in and reads me a chapter out of Tolstoy, and talks about the inability of systems to do any good if the soul is still unregenerate; and I continue to ride my fence-rail. But in any case there won't be any free love in my Socialism.

"Clara, I think I will tell you something. Do you remember the three knots I tied in the cord of our old cassock? Poverty, Chastity, Obedience?—Well, one of those vows I have kept—so far; because when the temptations come—and they do come, of course, to every man—I always see you, the little girl you were, wearing the cassock.

L. E."

IX

Lucian was in Europe most of the year after he and I left college. My Cousin Pauline had an idea that he ought to study at some foreign university—English or German—for a while; and to please her he went about from one to another, looking them over. But he never matriculated.

“It is very bad for me, this sort of thing, you know, Clara,” he wrote. “I could so easily drift into a dilettante, observatory existence. It is my tendency to take life as a picture, anyway—never to connect myself with it. Tell me how.”

His letters of that year, except one, lack something of the buoyancy and ardour that so fire the younger letters. I know now that he was afraid of himself, and that despite the seeming aimlessness of those drifting days he was making his great decision.

From Oxford he sent me a sonnet.

“I have had the good luck to meet the chap that lives in Shelley’s rooms at University College,” the letter said. “I was there the other night, and I told him a lot about Shelley that he didn’t know; but he took it calmly. ‘He used to lie here on the rug and roast his head and talk about the universe to Hogg,’ I said. And my host said, ‘Fancy!’ So after a while I left my host and went down and sat in the Memorial Room with the drowned image of Shelley. I sat there a long while; till they turned

me out, in fact. And then I went back to my room at the Mitre and wrote this in a great hurry.

“ *A Grave among the Eternal* ”—

You remember that phrase in the *Adonais*? It seems to me to fit.

“ That day ye thrust the lad without the gate,
 Ye knew not that the high, resistless tide
 Would bring him back; would sweep all bars aside,
 And strand him, well-belovèd, where so late
 He wandered alien and execrate.
 Ye wise, ye could not know that when he died,
 His spirit's drowned semblance, glorified,
 Would keep herein so honourable state.

“ Ye could not know that surely, one by one,
 Those silly dreams of his would drift ashore
 To waiting hearts,—your hearts,—grown covetous.
 Aye, deck his shrine!—Run, relic-seekers, run,
 Rescue his sea-changed dreams! Interpret us
 His message! He is dead! unbar the door!”

“ What would he be doing to-day, I wonder? Living in Italy, as I have the chance to live, and writing his immortal verse? Would he—could he, to-day? With East London staring him in the eyes?—What would he make of Tolstoy, do you suppose? Ah, they didn't have Tolstoy to hound them in those days. What do you make of him, Clara?—I've been reading *What is to be Done?*—Hear this!—

“ ‘ Self-denying and suffering are the lot and portion of a thinker and an artist, because their object is the welfare of men. Men are wretched: they suffer and go to ruin. One cannot wait and lose one's time.

“ ‘ A thinker and an artist will never sit on the heights of Olympus as we are apt to imagine: he must suffer in company with men in order to find salvation or consolation. . . .

“ ‘ And the only one certain characteristic of the presence of a calling is the self-denying, the sacrifice of one’s self in order to manifest the power ingrafted in man for the benefit of others.’ . . .

“ And shall one sacrifice the calling in order to sacrifice one’s self?

“ If it were an empty day I could be an idle singer without a qualm. But such a full day!—Shall I bind myself to the wheel of committees?

“ ‘ He must suffer in company with men in order to find salvation and consolation ’——Lord knows, I’m not bothering about salvation; but it is true that I can’t write unless I have something to write about—and we can’t find our inspiration among doctrinaire philosophies, the way those revolutionary poets did. We find our inspiration in life—and life must be lived, to know it. And if life be lived, to-day—will there be time to make a song of it? But what do I care for reform, anyway? Just a patching. Shall I give myself to board-meetings in order to darn a fabric that is rotten?—Is it rotten?—Yours,

“ L. E.”

X

Two more letters and this desultory chapter of our youth is ended. Not that we left off being young; one does not break that habit with a stroke of the pen. But undoubtedly there does come a moment,

before one is so very old, when one's attitude towards life fixes itself; perhaps not consciously. And these two letters, each in its own way, record such a moment.

They came to me in the same mail and, I remember, I opened Lucian's first. But to-day his letter shall come after Cyrus's.

I had begged off from Europe that summer, on the plea that my Cousin Pauline would have both her boys with her and would not need me. Cyrus went over immediately after his Commencement, and Lucian was lingering on the other side to attend a Socialist congress; merely out of curiosity, he said, and in order to be able to tell me about it. For I had begun to call myself a Socialist in those days, though I still balked at the party and at economic determinism. A Socialist of an individual and feminine variety, Helen called me.

It was in late August that the letters came.

"THE HOLY MOUNTAIN OF LA VERNA,
"Feast of the Transfiguration.

"CLARA DEAR,—Do you see where I am? I have been here a week, and I walked over, through Borgo San Sepolcro and Pieve San Stefano, and up the steep bare ways St. Francis used to travel. He came down by this road after he received the Stigmata; and at Borgo they almost worshipped him, and he escaped to the monastery at Monte Casale for a little while. You know Monte Casale—up in the hills above Borgo—where the three robbers repented and became brothers minor. I shall go out by Bibbiena and Poppi. The road is more beautiful that way, but it does not search the heart so much. It is very

arid above Pieve, on those treeless hill-tops; such a desert—with the strange ridge of dark trees like an oasis at its edge.

“The brothers have been very good to me. They have let me alone, and I have spent my days in the beech-wood, or down below the precipice with the white sheep-dogs.

“Clara, I am so afraid that I shall come here to stay, some day. And yet, perhaps not here; but somewhere separate. I am afraid.

“It seems to me the only way out is withdrawal. Giving the world as little chance to sin for you as possible. It is Tolstoy’s way; except that I should start less hampered than Tolstoy—having no wife and children. If there were an order of preaching friars—not necessarily Roman Catholic. Or rather, if I could go out and preach on my own responsibility, without being tied to any organisation. But it seems as if one always had to belong to something, to-day; and to belong to something—to be tied, to be responsible, in any way—that is fatal; for then immediately one begins to be mixed up with the sins of other people, and to make them commit sins.

“I think about it a great deal; and I wonder if perhaps I am not meant to do this thing. Because, the one thing that might tempt me—to stay—a selfish thing—is denied me.

“Or, I could do it by coming here, into this monastery—for example. Giving up all my own torment of judging. But I doubt if I do it that way. My conscience would never let me give it into any one else’s keeping—even the Church’s keeping. Even yours. But I should like to. But then, when one

has lived much in Italy, and one is Anglo-Saxon, one can have, inevitably, so little respect for the Roman organisation. I should like to ask Tolstoy about it; and yet I am not wholly in accord with Tolstoy either, for my Christianity is at bottom more doctrinal—more dogmatic I suppose, than his. If only I could be in accord, entirely, with some one, what a rest it would be!

“In one way, perhaps, you, with your sane common sense, will think that all this brooding is useless since there are still five years to run before I can repudiate the money and be out of leading-strings, even if I would. And at twenty-five one may see things quite differently from the way one saw them at twenty. But mother is asking me what I am going to ‘be.’ She thinks I might make a good lawyer, or a good clergyman—something that talks and persuades, she says. Because I have the gift of oratory—she says. Yet I cannot persuade her to let me be, first, myself. And if I could persuade her, how should I know what ‘myself’ is, in this chaos?

“Lucian says I am morbid; but I know that, quite well. What I want you to do is to write to mother and urge her not to press me to a decision. Tell her, what is perfectly true, that the philanthropic work I am doing among immigrants in America will have its educational value for me whatever else I may eventually decide to be. Don’t mention what I have said about monasteries. Try to comfort her by showing her that I shan’t be just drifting even if I don’t begin to study for a profession at once.

“How can any one make decisions that involve living, in a world that so manifestly isn’t fit to be

lived in? How can any one be anything but tentative in a civilisation so out of joint?

"One thing only I know, and that is that I must get rid of the mill-stone of the money. I shall take five years to think about how to do it.

"So you are a Socialist, of a sort? But don't you know, Clara, that no amount of external system will change the world unless men's hearts be changed?

"Christianity is enough. Can you call yourself a Christian and say that anything else is needed?

"But it must be Christ's Christianity, not the Roman kind that broke the heart of St. Francis, nor the Greek kind that has excommunicated Tolstoy, nor the Anglican kind that is established, nor the Protestant kind that is anybody's vagary. Am I an early Christian or merely an ultra-Protestant? When I ask myself that question I begin to wonder if I ought not to stick by Franciscanism, the Roman variety, for safety's sake. Can one be too individual?

"Cuthbert told me I was an anarchist, the day before Commencement. Cuthbert has all his social definitions at his tongue's end. He says that Tolstoy and I are both anarchists, but that being anarchists we are different kinds.

"At any rate, dear, you need not worry over me for five years to come. I shall stick to my Italian Circolo and my immigrants. The little harm that I can do them will, I must hope, not be counted against me in the end, since I am tied.—Yours,

"CYRUS."

The letter worried me a good deal. It was, indeed, a morbid letter. No one, at twenty, ought to write

a letter like that. And yet, if one did not write it at twenty, perhaps one never would.

I went back to one paragraph in it again and again. What was the thing, the selfish thing, that might tempt him to stay in the world—but was denied him? I did not like to think what it might be.

And Lucian, too, had been making his decisions, it seemed. The exultation of his greeting shouts at me from the flimsy foreign note paper that I have folded and unfolded so many times.

“DEAR COMRADE!” it begins.—“Dear Comrade!—Hark to the epithet!—Yes, I’ve gone and done it. Done it brown! I’ve joined the Party. Swept off my feet. Yes!—But you’d never guess who did the sweeping. It wasn’t the Congress; though that was avalanche enough, heaven knows. Nor it wasn’t Bebel, nor Jaures, nor any of the other torrential giants; though the confluent streams of their logic washed over me and through me as resistlessly as a mill-race submerges weeds. I and all the other little blades of grass were bent, prostrate, one way, like Dante’s purgatorial herbs. Nor it wasn’t the *Marseillaise*; though that did nearly finish me.

“But to begin:—The second day—which would be only yesterday if I hadn’t lived an immortal one since;—Well, we’ll call it yesterday;—during a recess, when I was stretching my legs—there appeared on a street crossing a loose-hung, elfish, bespectacled man, stooping a little as to his shoulders, but with a glance that stood upright and pulled you up to it. Nothing haughty; don’t misunderstand me; rather a mild glance—tranquil is a better word—with a

quizzical gleam in the corner of it. Is there anything familiar about those eyes, Clara? Do they remind you of some one?

" 'I have been wondering if your name is Lucian Emery,' said he. 'Mine is Llewellyn Evans.'

" 'Uncle Lew!' I shouted. And you should have seen the radiance of him.

" 'You looked so like the boy that Clara writes about,' he said, 'I had to risk it.'

" 'He is here as American delegate from Milwaukee. They're rather thick up that way, you know. We went to a co-operative restaurant and ate, and talked of you and me and him, and Socialism. Somehow, before the evening session was called, I had told him all my hopes and fears and doubts and dares and didn't-dares.

" 'I was squeamish too,' he said. 'You see, I was a shouting Methodist. I went into co-operation for the sake of brotherly love; and then later I ran up against the class struggle. And it took me quite some time before I was able to define the class struggle in terms of brotherly love. But it can be done. I've done it.' He rested his elbows on the table and his chin in his hands and looked somewhere off towards the New Jerusalem. 'I come not to bring peace, but a sword,' he said. 'Yes; it's brotherly love that makes me dig my proletarian brother in the ribs and say, "Sic him!" It's brotherly love that makes me hold up my capitalist brother and say, "Your money or your life!" I am my brother's keeper. I accept the responsibility. I'm out after souls, I am.'

" 'But they are out after bodies,' I threw in. 'Material things——'

“ ‘That’s just their bluff,’ he said. ‘And who are *they*? I’m they. You’ll be they.’

“ ‘But economic determinism is so horribly convincing,’ I said. ‘Morals *are* determined by economic conditions. History bears it out. It’s devilish. It can’t be true.’

“ ‘Not devilish—divine,’ he contradicted. And when I waited, he went on:—‘Let’s take our dear old myth of the Creation. *Genesis*, Chapter I. What is it but a statement of the materialistic basis of history? “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” economic determinism in a nut-shell. Nothing said about souls; but a place for souls to grow in. Some time later—days we say for convenience—He formed man out of the dust of the ground;—another place made ready; and He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul—with a capacity for being moralised—through temptation. Economic conditions prepared the way—a garden eastward in Eden, a stimulating helpmate, idleness.’

“ ‘But creation didn’t come first,’ I reminded him. ‘God came first—the moral principle.’

“ ‘Yes, God,’ he agreed. ‘But if I didn’t believe He was something a good deal bigger than a moral principle, I *would* give up.’

“ ‘But *they* don’t believe He came first. They think we invented Him.’

“ ‘They think,’ said Uncle Lew, leaning across the table till his nose almost touched mine. ‘They think that the underlying cause of creation is a mystery, which possibly man may never fathom. But when we get our universal language what do

you bet we don't discover that mystery is a scientific synonym for God? '

"Then, simultaneously, we remembered our co-operative Frankfurters, now cold, and our beer, now warm. And we stowed them away in a manner that would scandalise Mr. Fletcher—and ran for the hall. Hervé was talking, and I was glad Uncle Lew had found me, for he's been living on faith and newspaper reports thus far—not understanding either French or German. I managed to scribble a translation for him as the different ones got the floor.

"And so it happens that this morning I woke up to find myself a Socialist. Or rather, I hadn't been to sleep, for suddenly at one moment turning over in bed I was aware that I was a Socialist. And all the world came real. If I could describe to you that strange birth-moment. But I can't.

"All that it means I don't know yet. But inevitably a part of its meaning is renunciation. Look at Uncle Lew!

"And, Clara, I count on you. It all began with you. It was you who first revealed to me the possibility of a real world. Do you remember that day we sat in the old cleft rock and I told you the story of St. Francis, and you capped it with your co-operative colony, where you had known what it was to be hungry, and to beg? I thought of that, last night. There was almost nothing I didn't think of and remember, last night. Suppose you hadn't come?—I count on you to stand by me when mother and the marchese, and the trustees and Tristram Lawrence, and any other dream people protest. I count on you to stand by me if unreality tempts. Even if I never write

another line of verse—will you stand by me, Clara? This may not be the minstrel's hour, you know. They may need him to stoke the furnace.

“At dawn I was leaning out of my window among these Gothic gables that overhang the public square. And I said, ‘The question is—is this the road up Parnassus?’ And having said it out aloud, I knew that it wasn't the question at all—nor never was, with any true poet.

“So it's—Ho, for Propaganda!—Your comrade,
“L.”

BOOK II
COMMON DAY

“ The youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is nature’s priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended ;
At length the man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.”

WORDSWORTH, *Ode on Intimations of Immortality.*

CHAPTER I

LIGHTING THE TORCH

I

"THERE is no question it would be a boon to the party," said Lazarus Samson. "On such a financial basis," he added, and catching my eye, smiled frankly.

His smile is one of his assets, and on public platforms he works it rather hard. The fastidious criticise him for it. And it is true that if one sits near the back of the hall and doesn't see very well, the effect is a bit mechanical. But then, the whole effect of Lazarus is mechanical, a bit. He is like a very finely adjusted instrument, edgy, accurate—if need be, swift. Not a sword; nothing so showy and romantic; a safety razor, rather. He is a little man, thin, sallow, and rectangular. His smile has none of the oblique quality that makes Uncle Lew's so endearing; yet, of its kind, it is as honest.

"A daily would be more of a boon," said Cuthbert, doggedly.

"Yes, I know," Lucian agreed, the tinge of impatience in his tone that was there invariably when he discussed anything with Cuthbert.

"Better go slow," counselled Uncle Lew.

"That's why," said Lucian. "Of course, I'd rather begin with a daily; but think of all the things we don't know about running a newspaper."

"Well, I know a few." This from Cuthbert.

"Reporting isn't everything," said I. Perhaps I, too, was a bit impatient.

Cuthbert shoved his hands combatively deeper into his trousers' pockets and his legs nearer the fire. It seemed as if he reached all the way across the room and beyond, when he lounged in that particular posture.

There was a midsummer storm screaming in the dark around the farmhouse. The study windows flowed down like waterfalls. From the living-room Bertha Aarons's haranguing voice penetrated to us, and intermittently some one in there drummed on the piano.

"If I had been content to start it as a weekly," observed Uncle Lew, "it might not have come to grief so soon."

"It hasn't come to grief," interrupted Lucian.

"Well, no; I suppose not—if you back it." Uncle Lew and Larazus Samson smiled at each other.

"If you had only come to me in the first place," Lucian protested.

"How could he, when you were in Russia, revolutionising?" I asked.

"Yes; I suppose I've wasted heaps of time."

But Uncle Lew put in his protest. "Not a bit of it. Who could settle down with Japan and Russia at each other's throats—and then the uprising in Russia?——"

"How about the fellows that can't raise their travelling expenses?" queried Lucian. "They have to settle down."

Cuthbert sniffed.

"But now you will have this satisfaction," smiled Lazarus. "You will not either raise your travelling expenses any more, if you finance this paper. You can sink any amount."

"Praised be!" Lucian got up, beaming, and stretched himself.

"Then I understand that you take it over, as it stands, assets and liabilities," said I, knowing that Uncle Lew would never be the first to mention these details?

"I don't know that it has any assets," he murmured now.

"It has you!" cried Lucian. "And you weigh against any number of liabilities."

"Only I've never been bought yet." There was warning in Uncle Lew's smile.

"Just the same, you're mine, for keeps," Lucian retorted. "And it has the name—*The Torch*—That we keep too."

"You might find a better," Uncle Lew demurred. "A torch is smoky—lurid—it flares unsteadily."

"And don't we, as yet?"

"By we, who do you mean?" inquired Cuthbert. "There's nothing unsteady about the party. There's nothing unsteady about the march of Socialism; there's not a more inevitable thing in nature. It *is* Nature."

"Steady by jerks," said Lucian. "At least, if you're a revolutionary Socialist."

"The economic paradox," murmured Lazarus.

Cuthbert opened his mouth to speak, but I knew that the evening would be gone if we once strayed into abstract discussion; and both Lazarus and

Uncle Llewellyn must go back to the city the next day.

"And do you pay a certain fixed sum?" I began again, hurriedly.

"You?—What's the matter with saying we?" Lucian demanded. "Aren't you in this deal, Clara? I counted on your sinking a little something."

"But if it is a party organ?"

"Join the party!" Cuthbert chanted.

"Maybe she might, if you didn't hammer at her so about it," Lucian remarked.

"I do not see a necessity to have each member of the staff a party member," volunteered Lazarus. "If I understand Miss Emery, it is a question of tactics why she stays out. On the economic programme she is as sound as you or me. Our American methods she don't find herself always to agree with, that's all."

"Well, she can't moralise the party by staying outside the party," said Cuthbert. "If she wants to convert us, let her come in and be virus."

"Yes, I know," I faltered.

"When she does come in it'll be to stay," said Uncle Lew. "I know Clara. But meanwhile, just because she is outside, she gets at a section of the community we can't touch. I count on Clara to work up the subscription list in the women's colleges——"

"There speaks the managing editor!" cried Lucian.

"Oh, no! that's you!" protested Uncle Lew.

Here Helen put her head in from the living-room, looked round upon us, and let her eyes linger on me. "Never mind!" she said vaguely; and then, "Just for a minute."

II

I went with her into the living-room, where Bertha Aarons was waving the empty corn-popper and saying:—

“Now what do you say we organise the shop when we go back? Here’s five of us. And Beppina Capponi, why don’t you organise Eckstein’s?”

Beppina’s response was lost to me, for Helen had drawn me through the living-room and to the piazza.

“Feel this,” she said. “The Young Leonardos can’t possibly sleep in the meadow to-night. The ground is a sponge, and no tent will stand against this wind.”

“I’ve felt it,” said I, “let’s go in.” And we backed into the living-room again and let the door slam.

“Twenty of them,” continued Helen. “I told Cyrus he couldn’t count on the weather.”

“Where is Cyrus?”

“He took Vincenzino Spilla up on the five o’clock train to have his tooth out. He has just telephoned that he can’t get a team to bring them home to-night. I should think not!”

“The Young Leonardos will have to sleep on the floor of the kitchen and the parlour in the farmer’s house,” I said. “Fortunately they are little fellows.”

“They are there now, with your Cousin Pauline, making box kites.”

“They adore her,” said I.

“Yes,” Helen admitted. “But she’ll be coming over here presently, and somebody must sleep with

them. Cuthbert can't get back to his father's to-night; he might as well."

"Dump him in with a settlement club to keep order? When he doesn't believe in settlements? We can't do that."

"Who is Cuthbert, anyway?" demanded Helen.

"I know. But he's a guest. Lucian will."

"Very well!" said Helen grimly. "You break it to him."

"When Cousin Pauline comes over, keep her out of the study as long as you can," I begged. "We're so busy."

"She's got to stay where she is for a while, anyway." Helen reached for the telephone receiver, and I threaded my way around the working girls sitting on the floor.

"If there's another cut, we'll do it," proclaimed Bertha Aarons. The corn-popper was full now and she was shaking it over the coals. "And there's a cut coming. You watch!"

"Yes, we'll do it!" said the girls, looking around upon one another anxiously.

"The Women Garment Workers," Bertha said. "Don't it sound fine! And we'll make them recognise us."

"Don't it sound fine?" echoed Beppina Capponi doubtfully, as I shut the study door.

III

Lucian was drifting along the book-shelves, plucking a book out, here and there, and shuffling the leaves.

"It's all settled," he called to me. "The Woman's Page is yours, Clara; at a salary of \$5000.00 a year, to be paid to yourself on demand, by your own personal cheque. Uncle Lew will take the make-up, and Lazarus the foreign field; Cuthbert will handle the reporters—City Editor when we blossom daily. And the broad generalisations, the philosophical leading articles, the prophetic interpretations, shall be mine. You and I, in other words, will hold up the literary end of this periodical. The others will look after the man in the street. What do you think of this for a motto? From the *Revolt of Islam*, do you remember?—

" 'When mankind doth strive
With its oppressors in a strife of blood;
Or when free thoughts, like lightnings, are alive,
And in each bosom of the multitude
Justice and truth with custom's hydra brood
Wage silent war; when priests and kings dissemble
In smiles or frowns their fierce disquietude;
When round pure hearts a host of hopes assemble;
The snake and eagle meet—the world's foundations
tremble! ' "

"Why not print the whole poem while you're about it?" growled Cuthbert.

"Well, here's a shorter, from *Casa Guidi Windows*:—

" 'We hurry onward to extinguish hell
With our fresh souls, our younger hopes, and God's
Maturity of purpose.' "

"And to these foreign correspondents do I offer, how much?" inquired Lazarus.

"Oh, whatever is right, of course." Lucian's head was in another volume of poetry.

"I might find out from Tristram Lawrence what he pays for foreign articles. He has the best people, for his point of view," I suggested.

"Yes, do!" said Lucian. "And we'll pay a little more than he does. I should always want to go one better than Trissy, you know." Lucian's eyes, looking over the top of his book at me, were defiant despite their smile. They puzzled me. His whole manner, of late, in regard to Tristram, puzzled me.

"We must work out a budget," Lazarus continued. "And who is treasurer? He must know what he will have to draw on——"

"On me—that's what!" said Lucian. "Listen to this!—

" 'Let there be light! said Liberty.'—

Or do you like this better?—

" 'Reason is the fairest lamp for man.'—

Oh, you fellows needn't try to look interested. I know you're not. But I take my stand for a motto. It's all I do ask for."

"And we will decide on a place for offices, and if we print ourselves or make contracts with a printing house."

"Union," from Cuthbert.

"There is a house of ours," said I. "Where is it—Monroe Street?—in a row with a colonnade of stone pillars along the second story. It used to be a residence district, all that, but it's business now. You pass it when you go down to the settlement, if you walk across."

" Monroe Street—you do not mean those old houses so elegant in a row, like a picture of a temple of Greece?" Awe softened the staccato of Lazarus Samson's utterance.

" Yes; I happen to remember because when I went over the property with Mr. Warner last year, when he turned over my share, he spoke of this house as one whose lease would expire this autumn. It is a boarding-house, I think, wedged in between wholesale woollen and printing."

" But you could rent it to great advantage for you," suggested Lazarus.

" Why should we? "

Lazarus's mechanism clicked excitedly. He got up and walked across the floor and back again. " If we can make a start so big as that! " he said. " Such a dignity to encompass us. I did not think such big plans. It did not occur to me to expect—" Then his smile widened across his face, and he sat down.

" Here's Moody's *Fire Bringer*," said Lucian. " How's this?—

" ' Seeing the taper of small excellent light
He lifteth in his hand, the night rolls on
Before him, and day follows after him.'

Or no,—wait—wait!—I've got it!—I've got it!—
Listen!—

" ' About his torch shineth a dust of souls,
Daughters and sons, who fly into the light
With trembling, and emerge with prophecy.'

Whoop!" Lucian threw the book into the air and caught it with clapped hands.

"Capital!" said Uncle Lew.

"See, Clara!" Lucian brought the book to me and dropped on his knee beside my chair.

"I think I ought to have at least three men for assignments," observed Cuthbert. "We shall need to keep in touch with state activities as well as the city; and who runs the Washington end of things?"

"I know a comrade there," said Uncle Lew. "Two or three that would do." He gave their names and credentials.

In the living-room my Cousin Pauline began to sing "Caro, mio ben."

"You will have to sleep over at the farmer's with the Young Leonardos," I said in an undertone to Lucian.

"If we have our own printing-plant, closed shop, it would be simpler," Cuthbert was saying when I turned to listen.

"And maybe more expense," said Lazarus.

But the door opened, and my Cousin Pauline came in with a bowlful of popcorn. Behind her Helen's deprecatory eyebrows grimaced at me.

IV

The marchese had gone out to the Rockies with a party of Appalachians, to climb Mount Tacoma, and my Cousin Pauline was chaperoning us for the moment. I think she was also a little anxious about Cyrus, who had come into his share of the property a few months earlier, and was taking what she considered a rather alarming interest in an Anglican religious order that was building a monastery in our

valley. At any rate, she had been with us since early spring, and talked of spending the winter on this side.

"Come in, mother!" cried Lucian. "We're hatching a new plot."

Uncle Lew brought a chair for her and she shook her finger at him. "What mischief are you leading my boy into now?" she asked.

But it appealed to her when she heard what it was. And I am afraid we did not try to dispel her naïve delusion that editors of magazines command exceptional opportunities for the writing of verse.

"If I could but feel as much at ease about your brother," she sighed.

Whereupon Helen laughed rather annoyingly, and said one might suppose Cyrus was all that was dissipated and improper.

"Ah, but a little natural dissipation I could understand," mourned my Cousin Pauline.

Bertha Aarons in the doorway fixed her disillusioned Russian eyes on Cyrus's mother. "If madame could have a really worry, once," she remarked.

I saw amusement flash across Lazarus Samson's face, and his finger touch his lips warningly. He was very polite to all of us, always, was Lazarus; even to Lucian whom he knew best. Not obsequious, but careful.

"Dear child,"—my Cousin Pauline reached out a caressing hand to Bertha—"you cannot know, of course, but believe me, hunger and poverty are the least of worries."

"I can say that," the girl replied—"I do say that.

All Young Russia says it when it suffers to teach the peasants revolution. But it don't come well from you."

"Miss Aarons does not explain herself so polite as she means," interposed Lazarus hurriedly. "To have a son who is something approaching to an American edition of Tolstoy—we wouldn't consider that a worry for a mother."

"No, I ain't polite," said Bertha tranquilly.

"The marchesa knows how to make allowance for our bad breaks," Uncle Lew added.

"You!—You are a finished courtier!" Again my Cousin Pauline's finger admonished him.

"And that's the rudest thing you ever said to me," he retorted.

"But you Young Russians don't believe in Tolstoy," Cuthbert said aggressively. "No genuine Socialists can believe in him."

"We don't follow Tolstoy," amended Lazarus. "We believe in him—yes. He is the sincerest soul in Russia, in the world, to-day."

"Living a compromise," sneered Cuthbert.

The smile left Lazarus Samson's face abruptly—left all our faces.

"Mother, play us something—leave the door open," said Lucian.

V

"Uncle Lew," said I, "do you think I ought to join the party?" He and Lucian and I were lingering over the study fire. The others had wandered out to the music.

"If you think you ought, I do."

We all three smiled.

"Do you think I'm a moral snob?" I tried again.

"I do," said Lucian. "Why should you stay out because some of them are living with other men's wives, any more than you would stay out of the Church because there are divorced men paying pew rent?"

"It isn't individual morals—at least—I suppose it ought not to be—but collective morals——"

"As how?" said Uncle Lew, but I saw that he understood.

"Graft?" queried Lucian; "I don't believe it. Not in a disinterested organisation like ours. Not in our local, anyway."

"I was thinking of election returns."

"But that's too silly, Clara. It wouldn't pay to try to stuff. We couldn't if we tried; we haven't pull enough."

"I didn't mean just that. But suppose—in a minor election—I'm only supposing it, of course——"

"Of course," echoed Uncle Lew.

"Suppose we didn't have any chance of putting in our candidate—and we didn't have the incentive to make the vote a census, as we do in presidential elections——"

Lucian and Uncle Lew exchanged glances.

"And suppose it was to our advantage—from the point of view of class-conscious, revolutionary Socialism—as long as we couldn't get in ourselves—to see that the rottenest of the other municipal parties, or candidates, did get in—all for the sake of educating the public, of course, and of fostering

that discontent with the present *régime*, which is one of our weapons. And suppose our local—I say our, but it's purely hypothetical——”

“Of course,” reiterated Uncle Lew.

“Suppose our local fixed it up with the rotten party to deliver our vote over to them—for a consideration——”

“But they couldn't, you know, without taking a vote on it in the local, and there would be protests.” This from Lucian.

“And if there were not enough protests?”

“Well, it couldn't touch you, anyway,” Lucian veered. “We don't have woman suffrage in this state.” He laughed shamefacedly.

“I'm not quite so feminine as to be satisfied with that point of view—thank you.”

“But inside the local,” Lucian added, “you would have a vote. You could register a protest there, Clara.”

“Don't tell me what I could do!” I flashed. “That's not my point. My point is that those are vile, rotten, abominable tactics. If I were a man I'd use a stronger word.”

“Give it to us, Red Head! I thought you'd fire up before long,” said Uncle Lew. “You're right! You're dead right!—They're damnable—if they're true. But who says they're true?”

I suppose I looked conscious.

“Tristram Lawrence!” exclaimed Lucian scornfully. “Accusations of that sort always originate with that sort of moralist.”

“There must be some fire where there is smoke,” I retorted; “people don't invent such things.”

Lucian kicked the andirons moodily.

"We have our faults," acknowledged Uncle Lew; "we're violent. We might shoot and burn if we got too heady, I suppose. But—treachery—Jesuitism—well—I've knocked about in party locals a good deal and I haven't struck just that. And even if your informant"—Uncle Lew grinned suavely—"is right about it; do you choke off such tactics by staying outside?"

"Do you choke them off by staying in?"

"A five-cent yeast-cake," mused Uncle Lew. "But then you and I believe in miracles, Clara."

"Still, it is war," pursued Lucian. "I'm not sure that they are worse than any other war measures—granted war."

"There is such a thing as a fair fight," I protested.

"Never!" said Lucian.

"There is such a thing as refusing to be the one to take the unfair advantage."

"We're in to win."

"But if you're an economic determinist you think you'll win anyway. As for me, I'm every bit as convinced of economic determinism as—as Cuthbert, for that matter. I don't *think*—I *know* we'll win. The question is, do we hasten or hinder the victory by jesuitical, dishonourable methods? I think we hinder. That's my Christianity, of course."

"As a matter of fact, I don't think our local—I don't know about others—ever has tried just those particular tactics that you describe," Lucian remarked.

"There's an election for mayor coming off in December," said I.

Again those two exchanged glances.

"What it is to have a suspicious nature," teased Lucian.

"Helen says the Citizens' Reform League is talking of putting up Tristram Lawrence." I knew this would irritate him.

"So I hear," he returned. "They have just about as much sense as I gave them credit for. A man of letters!—A school teacher!"

"There are Bryce, Morley, Jusserand," I suggested.

"Yes;—I suppose *you do* put Trissy in the same class," he commented bitterly.

I resented his emphasis on the pronoun. "If Tristram does get in, it will be on a clean ballot," I declared.

"Glad you think so—but he won't get in." He flung the words at me over his shoulder and collided in the doorway with Helen.

"Well," said she, "it's about time you started. Candeloro has telephoned from the farmhouse that the Young Leonardos have let the kite paste boil all over the top of the stove, and Tonio Berchielli has decorated the kitchen floor with charcoal sketches."

"Oh, chide me not!—I go!" cried Lucian.

But Uncle Lew caught him and drew him back into the room, with—"Hold on! That's my funeral! I promised Cyrus. He arranged it with me before he went. I can manage the Young Leonardos."

Out in the hall, fishing for an umbrella in the confusion of the hat-rack, I said to Uncle Lew—"I have another grudge against the party.—It uses Lucian as if he were a kitchen knife; here, there, everywhere, peeling somebody's potatoes. He has an Ode to

Russian Freedom begun and never finished—a beautiful thing. He has a Japanese War ballad in his head—such music! And no time—no time—because he is kept buzzing from one committee to the next, and pestered with comrades. But what do they care for poetry!”

“I’m afraid it’s my fault,” sighed Uncle Lew. “And now I’ve got him into this paper scheme.”

“Oh, that is better than most,” I comforted him. “At least there’s a semblance of literature about it.”

“Not much.”

We went out on the wet verandah. Uncle Lew rammed a hat on his head and struggled with the catch of the umbrella.

“Is nothing worth while but the multiplication of locals?” I cried. “Have we really no use for poets, nowadays?”

“Go in out of the wet, Clara,” said Uncle Lew; and suddenly—“We need a poet in the party, if only to fight against dirty methods. You know, don’t you, that your poet would fight against that kind of dirt just as quick and just as everlastingly as your Reform candidate?”

“He’s not my Reform candidate.”

“No?” Uncle Lew looked back at me as he went down the verandah steps. The old hat hid his eyes, but the light from the living-room shone on his whimsical mouth. “I do like to see the natural woman in you come out,” he said.

“You mean when I lose my temper?” I called after him.

“No, not altogether.”

VI

When I went back to the library, Lucian was drooping over the fire in a weary sort of way, unusual with him, turning the leaves of Moody's *Fire Bringer*. The sad quietness of his face gave me that sort of helpless pang we call heart-ache.

"Lucian, you don't want to go into it," I said. "Why will you?"

At my first word his resolute chin went up, his indomitable eyes turned to mine defensively and cheerfully.

"Oh, but I do! You're mistaken. What makes you think I don't?"

I touched the book in his hand.

"Why, yes! I want both," he assented. "But I've an intuition that if I stepped out of the fight my verse would go rotten."

"And staying in—it doesn't go at all."

"I have to do the thing that seems to me most worth while," he insisted.

"But, Lucian, which does seem to you the most worth while?"

He laughed. "Why do you ask? Am I not the editor of *The Torch*?"

"You are afraid to choose the other because you want it most; because you love it best; because you would rather write a Hymn to Russian Freedom than edit *The Torch*. It is foolish to make that kind of choice."

"No, no!—I wouldn't. At least, I don't think I would.—I don't know.—How can I know, Clara?"

And even if I did know—one doesn't choose to do a thing because one likes it best. I do know that while the fight is on I can't stay out. It isn't as if I didn't like to fight. I'm a bully fighter, and you know it. One can't fight as well as I do and not like it."

"One doesn't choose to do a thing merely because one likes it; no," I agreed. "But if a poem, if a poet, might convert the world to a purer, saner, swifter Socialism than these mechanical party methods can?"

"Will they be the less mechanical if I don't have a hand in them? You are unjust to the party, Clara; impatient of it. That's where your class animus comes out, and it surprises me. Besides—how do I know I could be The Poet?"

"The party does not give you a chance to find out."

"The chance is mine to take. The trouble is, I want two chances. I want to live two lives in one—and I'm not big enough."

"Yes, you are!"

"But, Clara, that's what you've been insisting upon. You want me to give one up. And I can't give up either." He went to the book-shelves and thrust the *Fire Bringer* back into its place. "Every morning I think I have. But at night I find they're both there."

"Perhaps that is because you try to give up the one you are meant to keep."

"Oh, don't play devil's advocate!" he cried. "What does it matter what happens to my literary vanity, if this vile economic system can be cast out on the dust-heap and superseded by collectivism and

brotherly love? One poet more or less won't matter when all the world swings in tune."

"Don't call me a devil's advocate!" I pleaded. "I don't mean to be that. If only you wouldn't think the party and its methods the only way."

"As if I did!" he protested. "Am I Cuthbert? But you have this illogical prejudice against the party——"

"No, I haven't;—you don't understand. I can't bear being outside. But I am afraid of myself. This is a serious step. I can't take it simply because you and Uncle Lew have; no matter how much I may want to. If you and he were not already in the party I should find it much easier to decide whether I really do want to abolish the senate."

He laughed at that. "One can't take the senate seriously," he said. "Its abolition is only one of the many steps toward reconstruction. That's the way I look at it. What's the matter, Helen?"

For again Helen was looking in at the door.

"Uncle Lew can't sleep in both the kitchen and the sitting-room of the farmhouse at the same time," she remarked, "and Cuthbert, for all his Marxian bluster, doesn't seem to want the proletariat for a bed-fellow."

"I'm going over," Lucian said. "Good night. Clara and I got to talking."

"About our consciences," I added, as he disappeared.

"I don't doubt it," Helen observed. "It's a family characteristic, and seems to be catching: Bertha Aarons and Lazarus Samson are out on the verandah in all this wet discussing their consciences."

You know, she has scruples against the marriage ceremony."

"But so has he. Helen, we must be careful. It would be dreadful if anything happened here."

"My dear, don't be alarmed! Lazarus is really in love with that girl, and love is a safe, bourgeois emotion. In Russia he might take her at her word, but here in America he won't sacrifice her to a theory. He is unselfish under that nickel-plate finish. If it were Cuthbert I should be out there on the verandah with them. But Cuthbert looks higher than the proletariat for his soul's mate. He is hanging round the living-room now, waiting for me to come out of here so he can come in."

"Don't go!" I said hastily.

So she took Lucian's chair by the fire, and we must have sat there together nearly an hour, silent, watching the blaze burn itself out.

In my diary I find written under July 7th of that year—"To-day we rekindled Uncle Lew's *Torch*. It sputtered a good deal." And in a new paragraph:—

"How would it feel, I wonder, to have a heart big enough to ache over something not purely personal? I wish I knew how it felt to be really great. Not in achievement necessarily. Greatness does not seem to be indispensable to achievement. The small people, the limited people, the narrow people—like Napoleon—get results. Tolstoy doesn't get any. Nor St. Francis. Did he, though? Where are they? Napoleon made a new map of Europe. Something definite, that, if superficial. I wish I knew how it felt to desire the Co-operative Commonwealth so passionately that I did not have to stop to think whether or not I was true to myself in joining the

Socialist Party. The really great never need to question their own motives; they are not aware of greater and lesser desires; they are the one desire. I wish I knew how it felt to merge the individual—the individuals—in the idea; so that my heart might ache for every other hampered, strangled poet in this hindering, strangling economic system as it aches for Lucian. I wish I knew whether, if I had a vote, I would vote for Tristram Lawrence and the Reform Party who have a chance to win and clean things up a bit; or whether I would vote for some scrub candidate in the Socialist Party, put up just to split the vote and give the city another educational dose of machine corruption. I am not an opportunist. Am I? But it isn't as simple to me as it is to Lucian. If the Socialists would support Reform, why mightn't they convert Reform? Most of these Reformers are more than half-way Socialists as it is."

Something like this I must have been thinking as we sat by the fire, for my conversation with Helen follows on the next page of the little book.

"If you had a vote in the next election, how would you use it?" I remember I asked her.

"What did you say?" She came out of her own thoughts absently.

"How far away you were, Helen," I said.

"In the Never-Never Land." She leaned over to adjust a burning log. "How would I vote? It would depend upon the issue involved."

"Issues, men, principles," I mused. "But shouldn't principles carry most weight? Doesn't every other way involve compromise?"

"Not if one makes a principle of the issues." Her eyes quizzed me.

"Helen, that seems to me specious."

"It may be," she admitted with tantalising indifference.

"Cyrus won't vote at all?" I suggested.

To this she made no reply.

"You say it would depend upon the issues—you mean as they would affect democracy?"

"I never talk in ultimates, you know," she fenced.

"And if you are worrying over your hypothetical vote because you are afraid you might vote for Tristram Lawrence against your principles—why—let me tell you right now, Clara, that you are not in love with Tristram Lawrence. You play with the thought of being—but you're not."

"You seem to know all about being in love!" I retorted angrily.

She knelt down on the hearth and began to take off the half-burned wood and set it apart where it could cool away from the back log. "It's nearly twelve o'clock, did you know it?" she said.

When she had made the fire safe for the night, she still knelt there. Something in her passive stillness choked me, and I leaned down and put my arm around her neck remorsefully.

"What were you doing in the Never-Never Land?" I asked. "Buying new winter coats for all your settlement children?"

"No; I was mothering my own children," she said. "The children that I shall never have."

"Oh, Helen," I pleaded, "how do you know it is never?"

"How do I know that you are you and I am I?" Her eyes were turned away from mine toward the fire. "I know."

CHAPTER II

THE SMOKING FUSE

I

ONE evening in September Tristram Lawrence came to see me.

"Really at home?" he said, his eyes indulgent and playful.

I did not tell him that the maid had found me putting on my hat when she brought his card.

"It is good to find you for once where you belong," he added, relinquishing my hand in that reluctant way he has.

"Belong!" I echoed blankly, looking about the Italianate drawing-room of my Cousin Pauline's apartment. "Do I seem to you to belong here?"

"In one sense, no, of course." He paused. "To every bird its own nest." His eyes looked beyond me a moment, as if they saw—a nest. Then they dipped into my own eyes again.

Last year he had been very attentive to a Miss Warner, whose grandfather was one of the trustees of our estate. The year before there was a rumour of his engagement to Daisy Randall—who had since married Nicholas Richards—her father was something highly financial. Before that—had there been a rich young widow?—There had always been some one with money. And now?

"But you can hardly blame me for liking this better than a corner of the settlement parlour," he was saying, "when I have come to tell you something that means a great deal to me—to tell you first of all."

It seemed to me I ought to have outgrown the possibility of being flattered by this kind of obvious remark. But I hadn't. Still—

"I suppose the newspapers don't count," I said.

"Already!" he laughed. "I didn't give my final consent till this afternoon."

"I heard in the summer that they wanted you."

He leaned back in his chair and looked at the floor, forgetful of me, for the moment. "I didn't make up my mind in a hurry," he said. "And yet I wonder even now if I haven't been an ass."

I inadvertently let the moment for reassuring him slip. He was no stouter than he used to be, but he showed his forty years in a certain dryness of fibre. The pale brown hair was ashier, the thin cheeks slightly leathern in texture. The scholar's face was still there, but the set of his chin against his collar, the concentrated look in his eyes, or more accurately his eyebrows, hinted at an executive capacity which made one understand why the Citizens' Reform League had offered him the nomination.

"Oh, no!" I deprecated, remembering suddenly that he had wondered if he were an ass.

"All roads seem to lead to it, nowadays," he mused. "Action—action. We all get bitten. It is no longer possible to live consistently within the province of ideas. I have tried. I do not care to be that inferior thing, the man of action;—at least"—he hesitated—"I still feel that it is inferior."

"But you are ashamed of that feeling," said I.

He looked up and smiled. "There was once a little girl with a lucid mind," he said. "And she grew up, she and her mind." His chair was rather near, and he leaned nearer. "Do you know the thing that reassures me most in taking this step, Miss Clara? It is the consciousness that you will approve.—You do approve?—If I get in, shall you—be glad?—Shall you?"

The trite words would have been pleasant to any woman. He was a successful man of letters. Nevertheless—

"I haven't the faintest idea you will get in," I said. And just then Cyrus spoke in the doorway:—

"Good evening," he remarked casually to Tristram; and then to me—"You're coming down to the settlement, Clara? Helen has just telephoned."

Unintentional rudeness is not possible in some people. I knew that Cyrus had his reasons, but it was a bit annoying.

"No, she is not coming this evening," returned Tristram genially. "I have come to call, and I mean to stay. This is my last free evening until after the elections." His cool, amused eyes dismissed Cyrus, who, however, remained in the doorway, and merely said:—

"This strike is going to be a factor in the election."

"You mean these garment workers?" Tristram's attention was languid, but he did attend.

Cyrus nodded.

"A handful of women?"

"The men have begun to come out. And women have other means of influencing elections, lacking

the ballot." Cyrus's laconic utterance was entirely unemotional.

Tristram rested a hand on each knee, as if he meditated getting to his feet. "I had not attached any importance to it whatever," he said. "Of course, I knew there was a strike—yesterday?"

"Day before."

"It began with ten girls; only two over eighteen," I explained.

"To-night there are three hundred out," said Cyrus.

Tristram studied him with a sort of unwilling curiosity. "I am told," he said, "that you have your finger on the pulse of the working people in this town."

"The poor prefer a quack," Cyrus admitted.

"A quack, Cyrus!" It was I who made the protest.

"Oh, I'm in very good company," he replied. "Christ was a quack. At least the regular schools refused to countenance his methods of healing.—Not that I heal anything," he added. "Not that I have any methods."

"And just how do you think this strike will affect the election?" Tristram asked.

"For one thing, by its staying quality."

"Two months?"

"For another thing, by its spreading quality."

"Chiefly women?—And foreigners who have no vote?"

"Chiefly women—yes. But you like to play the squire of dames. Here's your chance."

A smile flickered—winced were a better word,

perhaps—on Tristram's delicate lips. "You mean—make it an issue?" he questioned.

"You'll have to before you're through."

"What is it at your settlement to-night?—A strike meeting?" Tristram absently rose to his feet, and with a certain abruptness sat down again.

"Why don't we all three go?" I suggested.

He looked from me to Cyrus. "I suspect this is a put-up job," he objected. His face was both amused and rueful. "My one free evening—Oh, Miss Clara!—But of course, if you'd rather——"

"So would you—now," I retorted, and went to put on my hat.

When I came back they were standing before a marble low relief of me that one of Cyrus's hungry Italians had done.

"But one needs the colour," Tristram said, turning to me. "Titian would have enjoyed painting you, Miss Clara."

"I don't think so," observed Cyrus, his back to us as he mused upon the bas-relief. "Watts would understand her better." He put out a finger and touched the marble brow gently. "This fellow was too young," he said, "but he needed the money. I knew he couldn't put the thinking spirit in here." The caressing fingers hovered, hesitated.

"I'm ready, Cyrus," I reminded him.

"Yes," he said, "I'll catch up."

II

Along the River Way there were crowds of people walking with autumn briskness. On the other shore and from the long low bridges the silver sparkles streamed down through the lightly ruffled water. Tristram talked of the new civic pride, the new enthusiasm for urban beauty, the new schemes for municipal architecture, the gropings of the Park Commission, the crusade against the electric signs that intermittently starred our heaven.

"A fair outside," said Cyrus. I had thought he was not listening. Tristram glanced sidewise at him with an amused smile.

"We had a *questionnaire* the other night in our Circolo del Mondo Nuovo," Cyrus added, "on how to improve the Italian quarter. It might give you points."

"What do they want?"

"Relief from the white slave traffic."

At the end of the River Way we struck across into the city, through a garish zone of moving-picture shows. It seemed as if Cyrus took off his hat to every other man or woman we met. The streets were unusually crowded, but we were all three taller than the average, and other faces had a way of seeking his face.

"Apparently you have some personal connection with each one of them," said Tristram presently, leaning out and eyeing him across me.

"Why, yes, of course," said Cyrus.

"And I suppose you could call each one by name?"

"Why, yes, of course."

Sometimes we had to elbow our way. Girls that I knew smiled at me. One said—"Our shop come out this afternoon, Miss Emery." And another, farther on, called back—"I'll be to the meeting all right, all right. I'm just laying for a bunch of finishers that haven't joined yet."

Three or four young Italian men jostled Tristram; then meeting Cyrus's eyes, burst into a hatless, joyous chorus of *buona seras*.

A sleek, heavy-looking man, loudly dressed in black, slightly oleaginous, watched us from the doorway of a saloon restaurant. He seemed especially interested in Tristram. When we came abreast of him he touched his hat to Cyrus and said kindly:—

"I bailed out an Eyetalian of yours to-day, Mr. Emery—Giuseppe Monterone."

"That so? He'll be your friend for life," Cyrus said over his shoulder.

"Yep; good job," the man agreed, and his somewhat throaty and complacent laugh followed us.

"Who is the philanthropist?" inquired Tristram.

"The boss of the settlement ward."

"That man?" Tristram palpably controlled an impulse to look back. "Well, he and I have both missed an opportunity."

"He didn't miss anything," said I, laughing. "He knew you."

We had left the winking glitter of the avenue and were making our way through the darker, dirtier streets in the vicinity of the settlement. Wavering

gas torches sputtered and sizzled above the push-carts. The human stream thickened and moved more sluggishly. Now and again an eddy of little children swirled about our feet. Here and there, in angles and corners, clusters of men and women stood still, like backwater, murmuring. Through open doorways the tenements breathed out their close, rank stench upon this flood. A muddy-mouthed, dark-eyed little child took Cyrus's hand and walked beside us the length of the block, looking up into his face and smiling. A woman, leaning out of an upper window, called down some sort of unintelligible Italian blessing upon his head.

"These are the ones who will turn me down, I suppose," Tristram speculated.

"All who have a vote will turn you down; yes," agreed Cyrus.

We picked our way over a slimy street-crossing, and at the other side Tristram exclaimed unexpectedly—"Cyrus, I'm beginning to think you ought to be the Reform candidate. You could carry this thing through."

"If I accepted the Reform platform—yes, perhaps." This frank recognition of his own power and equally genuine indifference to it were a part of Cyrus's charm.

"What's wrong with the platform?" asked Tristram.

"Its assumptions."

Surprised, I turned and looked at him, but held my tongue.

"Assumptions?" queried Tristram.

"That the system, political and industrial, is all

right as it stands. That all you need is good men to run it. How many good men has it swamped? "

"Cyrus!" I cried expectantly.

"Oh, no," he said to me, a hopeless, wistful sort of smile in his eyes, "I haven't come round to Socialism either; that doesn't follow. Socialism puts the cart before the horse, you know. You'll have to get your perfect man before you achieve your perfect system. It is the heart that must be changed."

"I sighed; but Tristram laughed and said—"Don't you see you're going round in a circle?"

"Saying one minute that I won't stand for the present system because it destroys the good man—and the next minute that I won't stand for Socialism because the bad man would destroy it? Oh, yes, I see. But there's a loophole. We might first catch our good man, and then give him *carte blanche* to change the system."

"But the system makes the man," I protested. "And the competitive system is making him a Socialist; and he again is making Socialism; and out of Socialism shall come a still better man, and so on."

"God makes the man," said Cyrus, with his gentle but inflexible obstinacy.

"Come, come, children, you mustn't quarrel on the street," laughed Tristram. "It all depends upon which came first—man or the system. Who can tell?"

"God came first, Clara; we agree there," Cyrus pleaded.

"But God may be the system," I suggested. And Tristram laughed aloud.

"What is your nostrum for making a good man?" he asked Cyrus, after a moment.

And Cyrus said—"Repentance."

"To be followed by that course in spiritual gymnastics entitled the Sermon on the Mount?"

"Exactly." Nothing could have been drier than Cyrus's tone.

The group of settlement buildings loomed at the end of the street. The crowd was all going our way now, quietly, swiftly.

"And how will you get them to take their dose?" Tristram continued lightly.

"By prayer," said Cyrus. "Yours and mine." And he looked across me into Tristram's face. And Tristram did not laugh again.

III

Cyrus had a key to the gate of the men's quad and we slipped in there, leaving the crowd to go round to the gymnasium door. This is the new part of the settlement, the part that Nicholas Richards designed, and we are all rather foolishly proud of it. The arts-and-crafts shops, the boys' club house, the dispensary, the music school, and the rooms of the men residents, look out on the quadrangle. At the top of the dispensary there is a loggia where occasional tubercular patients sleep out while arrangements are being made to send them to the tuberculosis camp; and there is a roof garden for open-air concerts above the music school. In summer the lace-makers and spinners sit in the shady cloister that opens on three sides of the court. As we made our way past the

weaving-room we could hear the measured click and thrust of the old women, taking their recreation at their Giottesque looms within. Suddenly a chorus of young voices began to sing a folk-song, something barbaric and slow, Polish probably. There was a not unpleasant suggestion of tobacco; in the middle of the quad two of the men residents were smoking, sitting on the edge of the ancient Roman sarcophagus that was my Cousin Pauline's latest gift to the settlement.

"That you, Emery?" said one of them. "If my young delinquents have begun to gather inside, would you mind singing out?" He was the probation officer in residence, and as four or five of his charges were already standing round in the lower hall of the boys' house as we passed through, Cyrus obligingly went back to the court-yard door and sang out.

In the main house, the old original settlement house, now patched and enlarged beyond recognition, we caught a glimpse, through a doorway, of the head worker deep in conference with two labour men and an officer of the Women's Trade Union League, and were discreetly passing by; but she saw us, as she sees everything and every one, and came to the door to greet Tristram, to congratulate his party on his nomination, and somehow to convey to him the impression that his coming to the settlement at this particular juncture was what one had a right to expect from his penetration and devotion.—Yes, we should find Helen in the gymnasium.

And there, at last, we found her, in the midst of a group of pale, foreign-looking girls, whose burning

eyes followed her hungrily, adoringly, down the room as she came to meet us.

"So Clara made you come?" she said to Tristram. "To lend a hand?—Or maybe to stick in a finger?"

"Both," he retorted. "Dear me, how you grow, down here! I haven't seen this place."

He looked around at the roomy hall, at the modern athletic equipment, at the chattering, shifting groups of stunted women. Up in the running track around the gallery, a slim, dark boy, in the abbreviated toggery beloved of sprinters, was training for some future Marathon. He ran lightly, steadily, his lips firm, his eyes dreaming.

"How Greek he is!" exclaimed Tristram.

"His name happens to be Aristides Philippopolis," Helen answered. "Ah, there's Bertha!" and she left us and hurried to the door at the bottom of the hall, where Bertha Aarons stood, unbuttoning her jacket.

"She might be a general estimating his strength before a battle. Who is she?" Tristram asked.

And when I told him she was the girl who had precipitated the strike, he laughed and said:—

"Good guess, wasn't it? I'd like to meet her."

He had to wait, however, for when we had made our way to her through the crowding girls, and I had touched her sleeve to get her attention, she said without turning:—

"I told my life-story to six newspaper fellows to-day already, Miss Emery. I ain't talking to anybody but strikers now for an hour, if he wants to listen."

"This is delicious," murmured Tristram, and for

the better part of an hour he did move about at her elbow, attentive, solicitous, yet with an obedient air of not wishing to hinder. I saw her give him a puzzled glance occasionally. After a while I knew that she was resisting an impulse to speak to him.

"I give him up," said Helen in my ear. "No man who is so trivial about women can have any depth of earnestness about other things."

"On the contrary, he thinks she can be useful to him in his election," I explained, rebuke in my tone.

"Oh, that's why he's here!" Helen fixed her eyes on me. "Not just because you came?"

"I wish you wouldn't," I remonstrated. "Cyrus suggested his coming, to get at the situation." I looked about for Cyrus, and saw him standing with his back against the Swedish bars at the side of the room, a little group of men and women around him. Helen and I edged near enough to hear him explaining to them in Italian that he did not believe in war and therefore could not fight with them, or against them; but that in every modern war there were men and women who followed the army to nurse the wounded, and if they were willing, he would like to be one of these.—There must be a committee for raising funds for relief——

Helen and I laughed into each other's eyes tenderly, and a Russian tailor standing beside us asked—"What does he say to them?"

I translated, and the man flashed upon me a look of shrewd understanding. "Half a dozen of non-combatants like that, and how soon we win out," he said.

"Miss Baldwin!" A girl was holding up her hand

to attract Helen's attention. "Here's all of us from Blum & Markowsky's; we all come out to-night. Does somebody take our names? What is it we do?"

"Miss Emery!—Miss Baldwin!" It was Bertha Aarons, pushing towards us with Tristram following close. "We are all right to listen now; I was waiting for the crowd from Blum's. The Women's Trade Union League organisers can get busy any time."

IV

Helen made a little speech of welcome; and the man from the Central Labour body gave a brief exposition of union principles; and I told them how the Women's Trade Union League could, and would, help them. Then Bertha Aarons took the floor, and the audience sighed and fluttered expectantly.

"What a type!" said Tristram in my ear. "Like molten steel at white heat." I saw what he meant; the thick pallor, colourless, yet afire. "Oriental eyes," he observed. "Curious, isn't it, the wrestle of the fatalist with the enthusiast going on in eyes like that?"

There was a sniff as of disapproval immediately behind me, and turning I found Cuthbert looking over my shoulder.

"Let me walk home with you," he said. "I've got some great news." His eyes were unusually bright; he seemed excited; but Bertha had begun and I had no time to answer.

"Now, girls," she cried, "what's it all about? Do you know?—What do we want?—What are we making this kick for?—Is it the fines?—Is it

the cut downs?—Say!—Bernheimer's has a grouch against their foreman; is that why we are striking?—Markowsky's canvas basters used to be allowed to take five stitches at a time, but now they get fined if they take more than one stitch at a time; is that why?—Is it because they make us buy our own needles?—Say! Is it because Giuseppina Barboni makes two-fifty a week working ten hours a day to pull bastings and pad lapels of coats?—Well, I'll tell you! All these things, they are why! Yes! But if you want to say it in one word, this is it: We are striking for the closed shop——”

“Sure! —Yes!” cried half a dozen voices.

“We are striking for the recognition of the union; and if we get that, we get everything. Now, that's what you got to remember.—You girls that sews on buttons, how do you feel to-night when you don't be threading your needles till twelve, one o'clock, to get ready for to-morrow's buttons?—Ain't it a holiday?—Well, you just say with yourself—‘If we get the closed shop it will be like this every night.’—Only it won't be a strike—that's the difference.—If we get the closed shop, the boss can't say to me to-day—‘You baste me twenty-four coats a day for seven and a half cents a coat.’ And then next week again—‘If I pay you seven and a half cents for a coat you have to baste me thirty-five coats a day.’ Oh, my God, what kind of a business is that!”

There was a low groaning throughout the hall. The Greek boy in the gallery had stopped running and was looking down over the railing curiously. Behind me Cuthbert's pencil made little swift whistling sounds and sudden jabs on his pad. He

was reporting the strike for *The Torch*, nothing else would have induced him to spend an hour at the settlement.

"Do I blame the foreman?" Bertha cried. "He's got to make a living out of it the same as you and me, doesn't he? It's up to him to get the most work for the lowest prices. If he gets mad and puts his fingers in my throat to choke me when I threaten him to go to the head of the firm—well—that ain't right; but then, he don't want to get fired, does he?—And I don't blame the boss—not very much. He's telling me the truth when he says these competing firms will squeeze him out if he don't cut down;—he's telling some of the truth. He's a hog, of course; he wants all what he can get; but he don't lie when he says that the others squeeze him if they can.—No; but where I blame is the system—that keeps the means of production in the hands of capital, and chains the workers in slavery."

There was a wild outburst of applause.

"Socialism—that's the talk!" shouted a man's voice.

"You're right, comrade," called Bertha, above the clapping. "But I forgot, I ain't going to talk it to-night."

"Yes, yes—go ahead!" cried several voices.

"No!" Bertha's negative was smiling but decided. "No; to-night I talk kindergarten talk; I talk trade unionism."

"Hummer, isn't she?" chuckled Cuthbert amid the laughter.

"Now look here!" she exclaimed, beating down the good-natured clamour with her own heavy, rather

roughened voice. "Now look here; don't you make the mistake to think I jolly the trade unions. The trade unions are the school where they make Socialists. They are the best school we got. They train the working class to stand together. They train the working class to know they are a class. They train the working class to know they are the ones to save themselves; nobody else dies to save them. And they are going to save themselves by standing together. Now here's the difference—the way I see it: trade unionists say—'We going to save ourselves;' Socialists say—'We going to save the world.' That's when you come out of the kindergarten into the high school—into the university."

Again there was loud clapping. I glanced at Tristram. His critic's eyes were fixed with intellectual pleasure upon Bertha; and I saw her look at him, and swiftly away again, as if against her will she wanted to know what he thought of her.

"But to-night," she continued, "it don't matter what else some of us are, we are all trade unionists. If there is anybody here who is not, he better walk out—because we don't have any use for him, nor for her. If there is anybody here who don't believe in the union and the closed shop, after all the talk this evening—from the organisers of the trade unions and the Women's Trade Union League—why, what is he here for? He better go. Our picketers, they will tackle him to-morrow morning."

There was more laughter, but no one went out.

"And now you have heard what Miss Baldwin said about committees. That's the next thing. We got to have a committee to raise funds, and to do the

clerical work, and to look up the girls that don't turn up; and a committee on public meetings—and grievances—and to confer with the employers when they get good and ready to confer.—They will—because we're going to stay out till they do.”

She paused, and her hearers made no sound, but every lip was set.

“Now, there must be near five hundred packed in here,” she resumed. “And we don't know your names, except a few; but will you give them to Miss Emery and Miss Baldwin and me; and Mr. Samson said he would be here to take the men's names——”

“He's detained,” Cuthbert called over my shoulder, “he'll try to come later.”

“I'll take the names for him,” said Cyrus.

“That's right! Everybody knows Mr. Cyrus Emery; he takes the men's names for committees. Say what you are willing to do. And for pickets now: I want all the very little, weak girls; all the little girls that ought to be under sixteen, but of course they ain't.”

She smiled sarcastically and other people laughed. “And you walk with your hands in your pockets, or behind your back. You don't touch anybody with your little finger. You don't stand in front of anybody; you don't blow your breath on them, because it might knock them down and then they can have you for assault. You just walk with them and talk very quiet. All the girls that will picket, go in the gymnasium office over there and wait for me. I'll tell you what you must say to the scabs. I'll tell you all the things you must say.—And now, let's get busy. The strike's on. We're five hundred already.

To-morrow we'll be a thousand—the next day two thousand, the next day six. There's over forty thousand garment workers in this town, and in ten days we'll have them all out—and out to win! "

A great wave of applause shook the hall, and Bertha came down from the low platform and made her way to us through crowds of radiant faces, and hands that struggled to touch her as she passed.

"It was masterly, Miss Aarons," said Tristram. "I hope I may do as well when my time comes."

"All but that about the kindergarten," Bertha replied, looking at me. "Miss Emery thinks I put my foot in it there. I saw her face when I said it."

"I was afraid—it wasn't quite discreet," I stammered apologetically.

"I ain't discreet. That's where I fall down every time," Bertha admitted. "If I don't do something to queer this whole show before I'm done, you can call me a miracle.—But it's you newspaper men that make the mischief," she added. "I'm not afraid of Comrade Sylvester here. *The Torch* is with the union in this fight. But how do I know"—she faced Tristram half defiantly—"what your high-class periodical will say about us? What is your high-class periodical anyhow? "

Tristram with becoming meekness gave the name of his great weekly, and—she had never heard of it.

"A new ten-center?" she inquired, and then—"How can I keep the run of all the fashion magazines?" Her eye travelled up and down Tristram's subdued elegance; he was wearing a dinner jacket and had kept on his light overcoat.

"This is Mr. Lawrence," said I, "Miss Aarons."

"Lawrence?" said Bertha, studying him seriously now. "You mean — Lawrence? — Mr. Tristram Lawrence?"—and Tristram bowed. For a moment she looked at him in silence. Then she said—"You know, there might be a chance for you, this election, if you would stand for the closed shop. But of course you don't believe in it—you're a Reformer."

"You think I am too old to be converted?" smiled Tristram. "Who knows, perhaps I am not even impervious to the appeal of Socialism?" He waited, the smile of challenge on his lips.

"Well, first, I must talk to those pickets," said Bertha, turning abruptly away.

"And then?" he suggested, following her.—"And then?"

"While I take the names of these girls who are willing to serve on the grievance committee," I said to Cuthbert, "you go and tell Cyrus that you will see me home."

But after I had said it I was almost sorry, he looked at me so strangely.

V

I am in a quandary about the autobiography.

I had not thought of it as a record of personal emotions. Robert Owen was my inspiration, not Rousseau; and the impulse toward self-revelation, so compelling in people like Marie Bashkirtseff, is quite alien to me—at least, so I supposed. Even apart from the question of good taste, I would rather keep certain things to myself; and as far as my experience goes, the woman who wouldn't is the exception, not the rule. When I was still a little

girl, Esther Summerson's story in *Bleak House* offended my embryonic instinct for literary values; it seemed to me so impossible that a real daughter could have brought herself to write that description of Lady Dedlock's death. And I remember scoring *Jane Eyre* unmercifully in a college theme, when I was a Sophomore, because of her lack of reticence in recording her sentiments for Rochester.

But Nemesis is upon me. In going over my notes and journals, to refresh my memory of that walk home with Cuthbert, I have been startled to find how important a rôle personal emotion has played in this stormy little social drama of ours. I had thought that the dramatic forces were the Strike, the Election, and our Socialist Newspaper; yet, if I leave out certain episodes and conversations, irrelevant enough on the surface, I cannot seem to make the crises intelligible. I have tried. But if I put those episodes and conversations in, I remind myself so inevitably of Mavis Clare in that book of Marie Corelli's where even the devil falls in love with her. And that would be giving my great-grandchildren such a wrong impression, for I am not really the sort of woman with whom men fall in love easily; not magnetic, not elusive, not provocative in any way; not like Helen, for example, whom men propose to within a week after they have met her—who has had three times as many lovers as I have (even counting all those as lovers who have asked me to marry them) and never needs to question their motives, since she is her only attraction.—But if it is indelicate of me to mention my own love affairs in my autobiography, how much more so to speak of Helen's!

I wrote Lucian that I thought I would tear up the whole thing; but to-day his letter has come, and he is so grieved. He asks me if the conversations that I shrink from including are more intimate than some of the poems he has printed. Perhaps not; it is hard to say. A different criterion of reticence applies to poems. He instances Tolstoy, whose books are one long, continuous, intimate revelation of himself. He reminds me of the autobiographical element in Dickens, in Thackeray, in George Eliot. He is the artist; his point of view is inevitable. He brushes aside my scruples as to involving other people, by again suggesting a change of names. So many strikes have happened, in so many cities, he pleads; and as for a Socialist paper in hot water, or a Reform candidate maligned, what is there distinctive about that?

Concerning Cuthbert, Lucian could not be more generous. He seems to like him and understand him better since he has had to forgive him so much. He feels that I ought not to be squeamish about repeating anything that helps to explain or excuse the ugly thing that Cuthbert did. But I wonder if he would feel so in Cuthbert's place. And I wonder if I exaggerate my own importance in the affair; or if Cuthbert himself realises why he did it. But no; he is not likely to go very deep down into that poor sore heart of his for motives.

Why I should feel less delicacy in regard to the things that Tristram said to me, I don't quite know, except that they were so deliberate. I want to be generous to Tristram. He was, of course, the injured party, and he insisted that he did not want to prosecute. I ought to be able to forgive him if

Lucian can. But could he ever forgive me if he read the autobiography?

And all the while I know that these scruples of mine are concerned very little with the fear of giving my great-grandchildren, or other readers less remote, a wrong impression of Cuthbert and Tristram, and very much with a desire to give them a right impression of me. Surely, any one must see that neither the hulking passion of a penniless country boy, nor the cold financial amorousness of an ambitious man in middle life, is the sort of homage that a woman willingly dwells on when she is writing her memoirs.

Perhaps we shall keep the autobiography until we are seventy-five. In that event I think I could bring myself to finish it now. I am afraid I only want an excuse. It has been a part of me so many years—and I always finish things.

VI

I am always rather silly about the settlement, it is such a pretty plaything—my doll's house, Helen calls it—and on our way out I could not resist taking Cuthbert through the little new theatre, where an impassioned rehearsal of Yeats's *Kathleen na Hoolihan* was going forward. I ought to have known better, for Cuthbert's attitude towards all settlements is, of course, immovably Marxian. Anything that aims to improve the conditions of the working people and tends to make them contented under the present economic system, he distrusts. Anything financed by the bourgeois capitalist as a philanthropic measure, he hates. As a matter of fact, we who have lived

in them know that settlements do not improve the conditions of the working people; indeed, that they cannot improve those conditions. We know also that instead of tending to make the poor man contented, this sort of patching which is all—in the way of relief—that settlements accomplish, only serves to aggravate his discontent with the economic system fraying and puckering around the patch. It is because I believe that settlements are one of the indirect ways of making working people into Socialists that I still keep my connection with Helen's settlement; it is also because I see that the educative reaction of a philanthropic measure is not confined to the technical beneficiaries; the settlement resident and the bourgeois capitalist invariably acquire something more than merit. Helen, although she repudiates Socialism as a system, is always getting me to sign my name to some new reform measure along socialistic lines, to be pressed at the state capitol.

But it is useless to say all this to Cuthbert, who moves in the realm of theory only; and why I allowed myself to argue with him, vehemently, for six blocks, I do not know. We ended, as always, by calling each other names.

"You are a doctrinaire," I taunted, "and of course you are obliged to ignore any facts that don't square with your theory."

"Well, I would rather be a doctrinaire than an opportunist or a mush of sentiment," he snapped. And at this point our exchange of amenities was interrupted by Lazarus Samson, who came hurrying across the street to ask if our meeting was over.

"She's there," said Cuthbert, "but if you don't

want the new Reform candidate to cut you out, you'd better hustle."

"What did she say to our Socialist candidate?" Lazarus asked; and there was some special meaning in his smile.

"I didn't get a chance to tell her," Cuthbert answered, flushing.

"Socialist candidate?" I asked, as we walked on. "I didn't know you were putting up one for this election."

"The strike changes the look of things, you know," Cuthbert explained. "It's sure to increase our vote, so we thought we'd have a try. We nominated to-night before I came to the settlement." The queer, excited look was shining again in those bright, wide-open eyes of his.

"Whom did you nominate?" I was beginning to feel a little excited myself.

"I'll give you three guesses."

And I immediately guessed Lucian.

"What do you take us for?" Cuthbert snorted. "You don't suppose he represents the party, do you?"

"Then it is Uncle Lew, I hope."

But no, it was not Uncle Lew. "He says himself he's not a leader, you know." There was a note of discomfiture in Cuthbert's usually crisp voice.

"Oh, Lazarus Samson, of course!"

With head sunk between his shoulders, Cuthbert gloomed at the pavement. He had never outgrown the country boy's slouching stride, and he lifted his feet as heavily in city streets as if he were walking over a ploughed field. Apparently, somehow, I had managed to hurt his feelings.

"Who is it, then? — Oh! — Cuthbert! — Is it you?"

Still he would not look at me; but he said, "Well, why not?" with a defiant outward thrust of his chin.

"How stupid of me!" I cried remorsefully. "I ought to have known it was you—from the way you looked."

"But you never do know," he answered. "My looks never mean anything to you."

"Oh, Cuthbert!—when I'm trying to tell you how glad I am!"

"You needn't trouble!"

"Very well, I won't."

We walked half a block in silence. Then, because after all it was my fault that his feelings were hurt, I relented, and spoke first.

"Do you remember that first day you took me up the mountain, Cuthbert, how you said, 'If ever I'm governor of the state?'—and now you're candidate for mayor."

"Well, I'm not such a fool as to think I'm going to be mayor," he replied, still ungracious.

"No, I suppose not," I agreed. "And I'm afraid that's my fault, too."

"Your fault?" He looked at me now, grudgingly.

"It's because you met me that day that you're a Socialist, I suppose."

He considered a moment before he said, as if the idea were new to him—"I suppose it is."

"Do you remember how you said you were going to be the richest man in the world, like my Uncle Jesse, and buy things, and own them?"

"Did I?" he said.

"And you would like to be rich, even now, Cuthbert."

"Naturally; who wouldn't! That's why I'm for Socialism. Is there any other way for a man like me to come out on top, nowadays?"

"I know—Marx says it is becoming less and less possible. But if you had never read Marx, you might have tried the other way. You might even have been one of the exceptions to the rule—and have succeeded."

"I know," he acquiesced. "But when a man gets his red card, when he joins the Socialist Party—well, I'd rather never come out on top than come there your Uncle Jesse's way—that's all."

"Then it isn't wholly self-interest——"

He turned on me with impatience and disgust. "Why not?—What else? The thing that helps my class is the thing that will help me in the long run. Enlightened self-interest; nothing more."

"So really we look at life just as differently to-day as we did on the mountains years ago."

"Why do you say that to-night?" he cried. "Is this the way you try to make me feel how glad you are that I have the nomination?" I would have protested, but without waiting he went on—"Aren't we fighting for the same end?—Where's the separation?—You don't think just as Cyrus does, or Lucian—he's no more Christian than I am."

"You are mistaken."

"I am not mistaken. Look at that last editorial of his against the Church——"

"It was intensely Christian, Cuthbert. How dull you are!"

"I am not so dull but that I know that if *he* wanted what *I* want, you'd give it——"

For a moment everything swam red; the bridge lights shot all ways at once, dizzily. I had a horrid fear that I had struck him, the impulse was so intense and swift; but the habit of self-control does count for something in a crisis.

"From a gentleman, your words would be an insult," I remarked. "But I have never mistaken you for a gentleman. Do not come with me any farther; I prefer to go home alone."

"Oh, Clara—forgive me!" he groaned. Little beads of moisture had started out upon his sullen, frightened face. But I turned my eyes away and quickened my steps.

"It is because you starve me that I say these things," he pleaded, keeping beside me.

"Cuthbert," I said, still with my eyes fixed ahead, "I will not be looked at as you are looking at me."

He turned his head and doggedly fell into step with me; and for more than half the River Way we kept silence. Then, his misery began to soften me, as he had doubtless hoped it might, and I said, trying not to be sententious:—

"The thing that separates me from my cousins is, in the one case an intellectual, in the other an ethical conception; the thing that separates me, and them, from you, is a spiritual attitude. I know, and you know, too, that Lucian and I are not Socialists from self-interest, Cuthbert. Self-interest would range us on the capitalist side in this class war. Neither can you accuse us of fatalism—of coming over because we think the outcome is inevitable and we want to

be on the side that wins. You know that Lucian and I wanted the socialisation of property long before we were willing to accept the materialistic interpretation of history. And as for Cyrus—self-interest?”

“No; I never said that,” murmured Cuthbert, his chin on his breast.

I waited a moment, gripping my courage—then—

“But even though we look at life so differently—even though our spirits are so far apart, I know that if I felt for you what you feel for me”—his haggard eyes turned to me again—“there might come a moment of—of—passion—when we should defy that spiritual barrier.—But after that there would be tragedy. One sees it every day.”

“Then this is not tragedy, you think?”

What could I say?

CHAPTER III

ILLUMINATION

I

At the end of October, when the strikers had begun to show the strain, we got out a strike edition of *The Torch*. I have a copy of it here beside me as I write—with the picture of Bertha Aarons on the cover, and Lazarus Samson's threatening forecast of the general strike and exposition of syndicalism leading the editorials, and Lucian's *Plea to the Comsumer*, those ironical verses that begin:—

“Who hath garments, let him strow them in the way,”

printed in red across the middle page.

Although little more than two months old, *The Torch* had already made good. Not financially, of course; the weekly deficit showed a tendency to increase according to the laws of geometrical progression; but that we had expected. What we cared about was the fact that everybody read it. The news-stands clamoured for it after the first three weeks, and Socialist locals all over the country sent in subscriptions. The city dailies made copy for a few days out of, “The Young Millionaires' New Toy,” “The Way to Sow Socialist Wild Oats,” “An Amusing Attempt at Utopian Journalism,” and called us *The Pink 'Un* and *The Safety Lamp*. One

of the more recondite, pursuing the historic method, furnished its readers with a list of reform periodicals, no one of which had survived its third number. By the end of September, however, the press was preserving a discreet silence concerning us; and in October the gist of one of our reviews, of an important Italian book on degeneracy and crime, was quoted with favourable comment in a magazine that makes a business of summarising current thought.

The strike, of course, increased our circulation; and also threatened to swamp us with copy. Lucian was for reorganising at once and becoming a daily. He had Cuthbert on his side; and for a day Lazarus Samson wavered, but his instinct for caution prevailed, and when we took the vote he went with Uncle Lew and me. We all agreed, however, that the strike issue must be an extra.

We none of us had much time to spare for food and sleep, that week, and I was at the office every night till after twelve, sifting and arranging the material that came pouring in for my department. It was like dwelling in the Cave of Rumour; the air we breathed was a perpetual whispering. The stately old house that sheltered *The Torch* was filled with evil report. Not in the offices of the staff only, but in the subscription department, the advertising department, the press room—scandals, political, industrial, domestic, teased for print. They lay in wait for me on the wide mahogany staircase. I could almost hear them through my thick office door, of a morning, as they clamoured in the letters on my desk; I used to dread opening that slow old door.

The others enjoyed them more than I did, and were in a state of continuous regret over the things we dared not publish. Men are hardier than women, in some ways. They like the fight for the fight's sake, and I wonder if we ever do. I was always saying "Don't!" In their different ways I think they were all a bit restive under what they good-naturedly dubbed "my feminine influence;" but they invariably brought me their copy for comment before they sent it up to the printers. It was very nice of them.

I remember, the day before the strike edition went to press, Lucian came into my office with an editorial on the campaign methods of the machine; and together we were trying to veil some of his utterances and convey to the public in non-libellous language the undoubted, but as yet unprovable, information that the machine candidate, who posed as the working man's friend, was drawing campaign funds from the tills of certain sweating manufacturers. We had been drawn by the incident into our old quarrel over Socialist Party tactics, and I was trying to maintain that to keep a third candidate in the field at this juncture was immoral since it could only split the Reform vote and make the machine's victory inevitable. But Lucian would persist in making the issue personal, and harping on my interest in the particular reformer in question. It was unworthy of him—unlike him; but I was trying hard to keep my temper, when the boy brought me Tristram Lawrence's card.

Lucian swept up his copy rather huffily.

"Don't go!" I said. "It must be business. He wouldn't come here to make a social call."

"Business, no doubt," he replied, "but evidently not with me."

At the door he looked back. "You know he is trying to make a fool of Bertha Aarons?"

"No, I don't know; but probably she does—if he is. Why make irrelevant remarks?"

"I never do."

"Then I must be stupid."

"Well, don't be stupid the next half hour, that's all!"

II

Tristram's greeting was disconcerting.

"If you will not stay at home to be called upon properly," he said, "what can I do?"

I stared.

"Is it a great liberty?" His eyes hovered amusedly over me. I felt as if I were a little girl playing editor.

"I should suppose you had work of your own to do, this time of day," I replied.

"And what is work?" He laid his arm along my desk and leaned toward me, smiling. "Work?—Isn't it a striving after the thing we want?"

I shook my head. "No—the thing we need."

The involuntary flash of appreciation in his eyes flattered me more than their superfluity of tenderness.

"You have a genius for the inevitable word," he said. "Need; yes. And I called on you yesterday at five, and the day before at half-past eight. Do you ever look in the card bowl on your hall table?"

It was on the tip of my tongue to say, "Your need

must be very great;” but I had a second thought, in time. “The Reform candidate evidently thinks I can be of service to him,” I mocked, instead.

“Oh, the Reform candidate!” He shrugged. “Perhaps I want to be mayor—I’m not so sure. Do you think I need to be mayor?”

“For the city’s sake?” I suggested.

“If I thought you really thought so”—his hand moved a bit farther toward me, along the desk.

“You don’t think I want the machine, I hope.”

“You don’t?—I thought that if you were a real bright red Socialist you had to want the machine—if you couldn’t have your own candidate. I thought you had to want the worst thing in sight, for its educational effect on the community. I gathered so much from *The Torch*.”

“Theoretically, you do,” I admitted.

“But—practically—you think—I might make a fairly decent mayor—Clara—you think I might?”

“Of course!”

But my matter-of-fact tone failed of its effect.

“You know, my party think I’m more than half a Socialist already,” he continued lightly. “They’re quite uneasy about me.”

“They needn’t be,” I taunted, laughing.

“No; they needn’t. But it is quite possible that if I come in, I shall be able—and willing—to push measures as Socialistic as any your young Sylvester would introduce.”

“Yes; I’ve observed you stealing his thunder.”

“The traction matter; and the city gas?—Well, I mean it.”

“Mean it!” said I. “What a strange affirmation.

Are you making other promises that you don't mean? "

"On the contrary," he answered with some heat, "I am making no promises which I do not see my way clear to carrying out. Sylvester would be wiser if he followed a similar policy."

"Still, as neither of you is likely to get a chance," I teased.

"I am not so much of an opportunist as that comes to, however."

I flushed at his implication, and for a moment there was silence. He drew a careful line along the edge of the desk with my paper cutter before he said:—

"If the Socialists want to give a practical demonstration of the power of co-operation—there is a chance for me."

I had nothing to say to this.

"Clara," he touched my fingers softly with the paper cutter. "Do you think Cuthbert Sylvester would make a better mayor than I? "

"No; how absurd! "

"You would rather see me mayor than either of those other two? "

"If it were a question of the individual—yes."

"But isn't it a question of the individual? Suppose—the impossible—that my party could be brought to consider a merger with the Socialists, and I should step down in favour of their candidate—would you agree to it? "

"I am afraid not," I faltered.

"Why? "

"You know why. Because I care for the cause

more than I do for the individual. Because Cuthbert is too ignorant, too inexperienced, too young. As its representative he could not fail, just now, to do Socialism more harm than good."

"And you think I should harm the cause also—by advocating municipal gas, municipal traction, municipal luncheons for school children?"

"Cuthbert and Lazarus Samson would think so. They would say you were hindering—setting back Socialism—by making the people too comfortable; putting them to sleep so the spoilers might have a freer field."

"But you?"

"I suppose I am still something of a Fabian."

"Then if you think my election would really further Socialism—oughtn't you to want to help me?"

"Help you?" I drew my hand away from the encroaching paper cutter. "How?"

The keen eyes quizzed. "Why—as Cyrus would say—with your prayers."

And suddenly he had my hand, fast under his; and the mockery had melted out of his eyes, out of his voice; and he was saying:—

"Child—I've waited years. Don't you know, yet, how you can help me? Don't you know what the one thing is that can make success worth while for me, or failure a triumph? Don't you know?—Dear, is it never going to be a question of the individual?—Never—never?"

One thinks of queer things at such times. I thought of that evening in the hay-field, long ago; and how Lucian's wet cheek pressing against mine had comforted me. The faint tapping of the type-

writer in the inner office stopped. My stenographer was in the habit of coming in without knocking. I pulled my hand away and the girl put her head in the door and said:—

“Miss Aarons; coming up.”

And as she said it, Bertha's knock came.

“Come!” I called; and to him, smiling, “It will depend upon the individual.”

“They said come right up,” Bertha explained, “but I will wait.”

“Oh, no!” I reassured her. “Mr. Lawrence had just finished.”

We were all three standing, and Tristram with an acquiescent smile gave his chair to Bertha; then, to my surprise, he drew up another for himself. I waited a suggestive moment, still standing, and he too, stood, of course. The dismissal direct is editorial prerogative—but I sat down.

“If my constituents could see me now!” he exclaimed gleefully, planting his chair opposite Bertha and me, with assumed bravado. “I am afraid they would cancel the nomination.”

Bertha laughed. “I will write them they don't have to worry. You are grinding the axes all right.”

“Did I have an axe to grind?” Tristram appealed to me.

But Bertha answered—“Maybe they are scissors. The closed shop and the Reform ticket—those two sharp edges. Screw them together—snip, snip—how sharp they cut!”

She sliced the air with two fingers, perilously near his nose.

"But if they cut me?" His suggestion was mournful.

"Oh, if you are clumsy!" she retorted. And then, meeting his eyes steadily—"It don't matter to me what happens to you if we win this strike."

His amused face said that he didn't believe her. "I am sufficiently flattered that you care to use me for your impersonal ends," he replied.

"Well, to be used that way don't flatter *me*." Again her eyes braved his. "But I stand it because I want to win."

The inference was not to be mistaken; and there was a pause before he said, at his gentlest:—

"You know, I want you to win."

"You hear that, Miss Emery?" Bertha cried. "There's copy for *The Torch*. 'The Reform candidate commits himself before witnesses.' Ain't that how you say it in headlines?"

He laughed, but I thought he looked a bit startled.

"Well, you know what you can do to help, if you mean what you say," Bertha continued. "You can make that philanthropic department store friend of yours demand the union label on all his ready-made suits."

The banter dropped from Tristram's tone. "I have been turning that over in my mind since you suggested it yesterday," he said.

"Keep on turning till it is done brown," urged Bertha.

"It would not necessarily commit him to the closed shop, to ask for the label on his goods."

"If he likes to think it wouldn't, why—I don't care." There was a hint of contempt in the corners

of Bertha's long mouth. "If he forces it on the manufacturer, that's what I'm after."

"Suppose I see what I can do." He turned to me now. "The union label stands for good conditions and fair wages, as I understand it——"

"Hold that thought!" Bertha broke in. "And hypnotise your philanthropic merchant with it. If you get him, the other stores will follow."

"You don't think I'll get him?" Tristram said to me.

"He's been a philanthropist longer than you have," I answered. "He knows all that the union label connotes. You may get him because he is really tender-hearted, and because the sympathy of the public is going with the strikers just now, and to side with them against the manufacturers might be good business policy—though I doubt it. You may get him because the Socialists are pressing for a general sympathetic strike of all industries. But you won't hoodwink him."

"You think I would try to hoodwink him?" Was it real chagrin, I wondered.

Bertha did not interrupt, this time, and I said, "All is fair?"

"Then come to lunch with me, both of you, and help me plan my attack. I am, as you hint, a babe in philanthropy; I need guidance."

He stood up and looked at us expectantly.

"If your constituents would be troubled to find you here," I suggested, "might they not be still more anxious if we lunched with you?"

"Oh, no! Guileless openness always disarms suspicion." He stooped for his hat.

"You don't need any lessons in hoodwinking," I laughed. "My lunch is always sent in, the day we go to press, thank you."

Bertha too had risen.

"Then you didn't want to see me about anything special?" I asked.

"Look at me forgetting!" she exclaimed, flushing; and laid on my desk another and more damaging version of the relations between the machine candidate and the sweating manufacturers.

"Yes; we have this," I said. "We risk something, printing it—but still——"

"Why—a libel would boom *The Torch*," she cried, "and the strike, and the Socialist campaign."

"It would depend on the libel," I demurred. "But this might—that's why I agreed to put it in."

"For the real fighting spirit, commend me to women!" Tristram murmured. He was holding the door open for Bertha; and as they went down the hall together I heard him say:—"So you're not afraid to lunch with me?"

"It's you that take the risk, to be seen with me," she answered. "They know I will work you for the strike if I can. But what can you work me for? I don't have a vote."

Suppose, after all these cautious, fastidious years he were to fall in love with a girl who had no money—a working girl? How good for him it would be! But would it be good for her? I wished, uneasily, that I had gone to lunch with them.

III

Two hours afterward, when I was munching a belated sandwich and blue pencilling copy for the importunate printers' boy, the house telephone buzzed, and Lucian's voice said—"Mother is here."

I recognised the appeal.

"Wouldn't she like to come up to me, in about five minutes?" I suggested.

"If you could come down, Clara?—The marchese is here also.—It's about Cyrus."

"We have the staff meeting at four-thirty."

"I know."

"Cyrus isn't there?"

"No; but he's coming in for the meeting, to give us some statistics on the amount of strikers' relief necessary."

"Wouldn't it expedite matters to have him drop in earlier?"

"It might."

So I rang up Helen at the settlement. She could usually be counted on to know where Cyrus was. And he was there, with her, she said. There was something queer about her voice. No; he was not in that room—in the next.

"Helen, is anything the matter?" I asked.

"Matter?"

"You sound—I don't know—offended; secretive."

"Perhaps you've done me an injury and your conscience is guilty," she replied. "I don't know what else it can be. Shall I call Cyrus?"

"No; if you'll just tell him not to wait till four-thirty. We'd be glad to have him come along now, if he can."

"You know," she said hesitatingly, "what he wants to do?"

"No; I've hardly seen him this week, we've been so rushed at the office."

I waited a moment, and as I added, "Good-bye," her reluctant voice said—"Don't hinder him, Clara!"

I asked what she meant, but she had evidently hung up the receiver.

In Lucian's office the marchese was standing at gaze, thirstily, before a large photograph on glass, of Mont Blanc from Courmayeur, which Lucian kept hanging in the window. My Cousin Pauline flitted about, a-tremble, like a moth. Lucian was signing letters for which his secretary waited.

"Clara, darling, I am being a bother as usual." My Cousin Pauline kissed me daintily. "Lucian is being his most patient." She made a mischievous grimace at her son, who said:—

"That's all for now, Miss Merrill," to the secretary—and we were left *en famille*.

"Perhaps Clara knows all about it?" My Cousin Pauline's voice was wistful. "I am usually the last one in whom he confides."

It pleased her to find that I knew nothing. Cyrus had a queer dread of being influenced in his decisions by his affections.

"Is it the Anglican Benedictines?" I asked, "or Rome?"

"Per Dio! Does he consider Rome?" exclaimed the marchese, roused from his contemplation of Mont

Blanc. "They will strip him clean if they get him. We must not allow that."

"If we only knew," my Cousin Pauline mourned. "All he will say is that he wants to disappear. I don't know what he means. Disappear?"

"He is very Tolstoyan, you know," said Lucian.

"But even Tolstoy considers his family," she complained. "Lucian, if I had been a selfish woman, your life would be very different."

Lucian laughed, and kissed her.

"Do I claim my children for myself? Arnolfo knows what I suffer in these separations."

The marchese turned back to the snows of Mont Blanc.

"If I were a worldly mother, it might be better for all of us. I never told you of Prince Pazzini's overtures, Lucian—his youngest daughter—you remember——"

"I'm glad you haven't," Lucian interrupted hastily.

"And last winter when Clara was with me in Paris, the Conte de Ferrand——"

"Dear Cousin Pauline," I protested.

"An old legitimist family," she sighed. "You don't think, Clara, that a love affair has anything to do with Cyrus's wanting to go away?"

"He has never told me so."

"I used to be afraid it might be Helen?"

"You need not be," said I, resentful for Helen.

"Mother dear," said Lucian gently, "don't you see it's the world's muddle that's breaking his heart? He isn't made like me. It exhilarates me. My

dramatic sense is like a hard shell; things glance off my surface. But he's all exposed. Let him go!"

"Yes; but I think there must be something personal as well," she reiterated. "It is unnatural to be so depressed over other people's misfortunes."

Lucian's burst of laughter bewildered her.

"If any one could find out, I suppose it is Clara," she said rather grudgingly.

I did not offer to try.

"Helen and I are not *simpatica*," she sighed; "but even if it were Helen—I want him to have what he wants. What else do I live for? I want you all to have what you want, dear children."

"Then let him go," I pleaded.

"You know, mother," warned Lucian, "he can go without asking."

"If it should be a religious mania," the marchese said without looking round.

"I don't think I catch your point, sir." Lucian's voice was cold.

"In your mother's interest, my dear Lucian, I should protest if the money went to the Vatican."

"Oh, the money!" Nothing could exceed Lucian's bored scorn.

My Cousin Pauline cast a deprecatory glance at the marchese's expressive Italian shoulders, and murmured something about stewardship.

And Cyrus, standing in the doorway, said:—

"If it's the money that bothers you—I plan to sell all that I have, and give to the poor."

"Darling, who are the poor?" his mother asked in her most tenderly metaphysical manner.

"I shall give some of it to you, mother," he answered quietly.

She coloured the least bit, and I saw in her long grey eyes the old look of annoyance and distaste. "Dear, that is not a pretty joke," she chided.

"Is it a joke?" he inquired. "You know I have very little sense of humour."

"Sit down, old man!" said Lucian. "What is it you want to do? Clara and I are all in the dark."

But Cyrus stood where he was, looking off into a dream, with that pale gaze of his.

"I have told mother," he began presently. "I want to go away—alone. I suppose philosophically it would be called renouncing civilisation——"

"If you can," I suggested.

"If I can." He made the admission tranquilly.

"Are you sure that isn't the coward's way?" asked Lucian.

"No; I am not sure. Almost every one else whom I know seems to me self-deceived on one point or another. Why not I? But my conscious motive is not one of escape. If by wearing this Nessus shirt"—he plucked at his rather rusty tweeds—"I could break the economic spell that binds those who wove it; if the blood and death that saturate these clothes could make a proper scapegoat of me—what a privilege to be sprinkled and stained! But there is no atoning power in these garments of degradation; they are the grave-clothes of unrepented sin."

The contrast between the passionate words and the unemotional voice gave one a lump in one's throat. My Cousin Pauline wrung off her gloves as if they hurt her. The marchese had turned his back on

Mont Blanc. Uncle Lew, in his shirt sleeves, his arms streaming with galley proof, suddenly bolted into the room, with:—

“ Say, Lucian, this leader runs over half a column; how many adjectives will you sacrifice? ” And then, “ Excuse *me!* ” as he discovered us all.

“ Don’t go! ” Cyrus said, putting out a hand. “ You will know what I mean. The world is possessed of a devil.”

“ Sure thing! ” agreed Uncle Lew. He hitched himself upon the corner of Lucian’s desk, one leg swinging, the proof-sheets crushed against his breast.

“ What if this kind cometh out only by prayer and fasting? ” said Cyrus.

“ Well, you know, ” Uncle Lew acknowledged awkwardly, “ I’m not much of a thinker. I always have believed in prayer. I pray for rain. Its unscientific, they tell me.”

“ I touch reality when I pray, never else, ” said Cyrus. “ You ask me to find reality by signing cheques; to cast out the devil by subscribing to Fresh Air Funds and Strikers’ Relief; by endowing Old Ladies’ Homes and Professorships of Economics——”

“ Not I, ” protested Lucian. “ No Socialist does.”

“ But Socialism is the most unreal thing of all, brother. A strait jacket for a world possessed. Can you not see the creature writhe and shriek and foam at the mouth, until the bonds are burst? ”

“ Yes, ” said Uncle Lew. “ There’s got to be the change of heart to correspond——”

“ And the conditions will prepare the way for the change of heart, ” Lucian interrupted.

“ The conditions necessary for a change of heart

are conviction of sin, and repentance," his brother replied. "Not the socialisation of property and a full belly."

"Dearest——" murmured my Cousin Pauline.

"I'm not so sure," retorted Lucian. "It was a full belly that convicted me of sin."

"Darlings!" the murmur came again.

"Still, it didn't me," Uncle Lew mused. "I wonder if we can generalise?"

"It didn't me," said I.

"Christ and St. Francis convicted me of sin," Cyrus said. "By prayer and fasting."

"No; by their life—their actions," Lucian cried.

"Action that is not prayer is never real," his brother answered. "They knew how to pray. Let me go away, mother, and learn of them. We shall never get a real world except by prayer."

"Let the boy go, marchese!" said Uncle Lew gravely. "I wish he were my boy." He was on his way to the door, and he laid his hand on Cyrus's shoulder in passing.

My Cousin Pauline hesitated, impressed. "Of course, I shall be led," she faltered.

"Just so you're sure of your leader, that's all," said Uncle Lew. "It's risky sinning against the Holy Ghost."

"He is very bizarre, that good fellow," observed the marchese appreciatively, when the door had closed.

"I don't think I quite caught his meaning," said my Cousin Pauline. "But Cyrus knows that the last thing in the world that I want to do is to thwart him in the service of humanity. When you were

little boys, you and Cyrus, did I not dedicate you to the service of humanity? Did I not dedicate myself? Do I not take up some philanthropic work wherever I happen to be? Even on the steamer coming over this last time, we read the *Idylls of the King* to the steerage one afternoon. But to say you are serving humanity by trying to overturn the institutions that supply you with your funds of stewardship—as you and Clara are doing—or by running away from the suffering thousands that cry to you for help, as Cyrus——”

Cyrus shook his head. “No; it is because I want to get near to them, mother. I have tried your way. I have sat on the edge of the gulf and flung in philanthropic doles. And the gulf only widens. Helen builds bridges, but the bank caves in. Lucian and Clara hang their castle in the air above the gulf—a mirage. I want to try a new way. I want to go into the gulf; to lose myself in it.”

My Cousin Pauline caught his hand and clung to his sleeve. “No, no! I don’t know what you mean. I won’t let you!” she cried.

“I only want to say my prayers. So simple, mother!”

“Oh, but, darling, you could go to the theological seminary, and afterwards have a parish, and we’d build a big parish house with a roof garden, and you could marry some nice girl——”

Standing impassive in her grasp, looking beyond us all, he shook his head.

“You have some dreadful celibate notion about marriage being wrong—and there is a girl, I know there is a girl,” she wailed. “It is like your vege-

tarianism. I know you won't talk to me about such things: you never will. But talk to Clara, dearest——"

He looked at his mother then: so strangely.

"Clara," she pleaded, "you can argue and I can't; he will listen to you——"

"Celibacy has nothing to do with it, mother," he said.

"But there is a girl, Cyrus," she persisted. "Clara, isn't there? You are running away from some girl——"

"Mother—really——" objected Lucian.

"But do you know that he wants to go away *now*—to-morrow, or next day?" cried my Cousin Pauline. "The strike means nothing to him—the election—nothing——"

"The strike will not be won by the funds that I subscribe," Cyrus explained wearily.

"And where are you going?" his mother continued.—"No one is to ask. Your master, Tolstoy, does not carry things to such extremes. He thinks of his loved ones; he crushes his individual preferences."

"Tolstoy is not my master, mother. Christ is my master. I believe that Tolstoy knows he is sinning against love in not pushing his convictions to their extremes. I believe that is his tragedy."

"Your arrogance grieves me immeasurably, Cyrus. Your self-deception is monstrous. Because of a boyish infatuation for some girl who is evidently unsuitable, or who is playing with you and keeping you on tenterhooks, you wish to break my heart and make your family notorious. And to justify yourself you say, 'I must go because I am holy—as holy as St. Francis—holier than Tolstoy. I am the modern

saint and the world waits for my prayers, to be saved.' ”

“ Mother, how dare you! ” Lucian had bounded from his chair, his face scarlet, his eyes two swords of anger.

“ I had not thought of it that way, ” said Cyrus, with bent head. “ You may be right. I wish I knew. ”

“ Well, I know! ” shouted Lucian. “ And you are going. ”

“ Oh, Lucian!—Oh, Lucian! ” said Cyrus, and took his brother's clenched hands. I shall always be glad I saw them look at each other like that. Then Cyrus said, so sadly, “ But it is I who must make the decision. ”

“ Mother, take back what you said! ” cried Lucian. “ You had no right—— ”

“ A mother has always the right to rebuke her son, ” observed the marchese sententiously. “ No son is ever justified in addressing his mother as you have allowed yourself to address your mother. In Italy—— ”

“ But this is our harsh America, *carino*. ” My Cousin Pauline turned her tear-brimmed eyes upon her husband gratefully.

“ I apologise for raising my voice, ” said Lucian. “ I lost my temper. But you know, mother—we all know, that this talk about a girl is absurd. If it were I—but women never exist for Cyrus—as women. ”

Why this remark impelled me to take up the cudgels for Cyrus I do not quite know; but I said—“ Is that the sort of assumption we have the right to

make about other people, Lucian?" And was immediately annoyed with myself, for Lucian gave me a swift, startled look.

"If I knew that it was cowardice," said Cyrus, and turning to me slowly he let his eyes rest in mine—"If I knew I ought to stay, I hope I should stay, whatever it cost me. But I think I ought to go.—I wish I knew." And wheeling round to his mother, he added, "I will not go—yet."

And his mother began to sob on the marchese's shoulder. And Lucian stood rooted, looking thoughtfully, with grave, troubled eyes, at his brother, and at me, and back again at his brother.

When Lazarus Samson's brisk rap at the door shattered our silence, I hurried across the room before he could enter, to ask him to delay the staff meeting five minutes. And presently, Lucian and Cyrus went down to the door with my Cousin Pauline and the marchese, and inducted them filially into the motor.

IV

Lucian and Uncle Lew and I had a very high standard for *The Torch*. I think we all three cherished the hope, unacknowledged, that it might be the model for millennial journalism. But Lazarus Samson and Cuthbert were working for immediate results in a partisan present. Impeccable English, unerring taste, a *morale* without blemish, were not germane to their ideal.

We all made concessions. Uncle Lew made the most, I think; yet, curiously enough, he got his way

oftener than the rest of us. I got my way, too, a good many times, but not so unobtrusively. Cuthbert and I fought three weeks over the spurious verb "to enthuse," I remember. Uncle Lew was for letting him have it; but I couldn't. Over questions of policy we were less venomous, possibly, though no less rigid. Socialism, for Lazarus Samson, included the abolition of the marriage-tie and the repudiation of Christianity. He could be pinned down in argument and made to acknowledge that the economic theory did not cover these issues, but his European tradition inhibited him from conceiving social revolt as apart from them. He was for ever bringing in translations of French, or Italian, or German diatribes against ecclesiasticism—material without point for an untrammelled American proletariat. If we refused to print a crude attack upon the Church, signed by *An Atheist*, he could not divest himself of the idea that we were throttling freedom of speech. His attitude towards the Holy State of Matrimony was equally advanced, though not so bitter. When even Cuthbert voted against a Socialistic serial whose Socialism was the sketchiest *mise en scène* for the erotic vagaries of the heroine, Lazarus acquiesced with an amused and scornful smile, and, respecting our Anglo-Saxon reticence, did not press for reasons; but when I pleaded for the suppression of a spicy correspondence between "Christian" and "Free Thinker," after the argument had endured for three weeks and the letters had attained the length of five columns, his sarcasm slipped the leash; he smiled as always, but a smile with edges.

I sometimes speculated uneasily upon his relations with Bertha Aarons, although Helen, who saw them together oftener than I did, was reassuring.

"She's ready for anything, of course," I remember Helen's saying. "But he's not living in Russia, or in Paris, and he knows it. He has no intention of shocking any of our sensibilities." At this point we had veered off into an altercation on the nature of love.

Since the beginning of the strike, however, Helen and I had had no opportunity for discussion, abstract or personal. Her interpretation of Lazarus's emotions, now that Tristram Lawrence was a factor in the situation—if he were a factor—I could only infer from her zeal in chaperoning Bertha and Tristram whenever opportunity offered, and from the way in which her eyebrows tilted at me across the room when she wanted me to spoil a *tête-à-tête*. I wondered now, as I waited in Lucian's office for the postponed conference, if I ought to have set aside editorial exigencies and gone to lunch with those two.

The door was ajar, and Lazarus slipped in and sat down on the fat edge of the leather Davenport; he had to sit on the edge of most things, being a little man. He said nothing, only sat there upright, his hands on his knees, his face fixed in thought, strangely unsmiling. I busied myself with proof sheets; but that still, inward look drew my eyes again and again.

Cuthbert and Uncle Lew came in together, discussing an undesirable advertisement. I remember Cuthbert was saying, "It won't do. I was talking about it last night with Mendel of the Typographical. If *The Torch* is going to hold the proletariat, it's got

to give it the stuff it wants, advertisements and all. What do our people care for dinky arts-and-crafts book-binding? They're not buying *éditions de luxe* for their parlour tables. If we're giving away advertising space, I say give it to Bebel's new book, or something of that kind that hasn't been puffed the way it deserves. Who is this fellow? "

"Benacci?" I asked, looking up from my proof. "He does beautiful leather work, and he's having such a hard time. He was digging in a sewer. It isn't a free advertisement; I will pay for it if Lucian doesn't. He's one of Lucian's."

"Oh, that's all very well," Cuthbert grumbled. "It may be settlement sentiment, but it's not business. Put it in Lawrence's dilettante sheet if you want to spend money on the Dago; that's where it belongs."

"I have," I said, "but it belongs in ours, too; we are not merely a proletarian organ."

"We'll never get anywhere till we are," he muttered.

"That's where we differ," I remarked.

"Of course, I never expect Lucian to get our point of view, but I did have hopes of you." There was a certain wistfulness underlying his retort.

"Our point of view?"

"Uncle Lew's and mine—the Proletarian."

"You're not making the mistake of supposing that you and I belong to the Proletariat, are you?" queried Uncle Lew with suspicious mildness.

"I don't know where else?" Cuthbert answered defiantly.

"Well—it begins with P all right, but Parasite's

its name," said Uncle Lew. "That's us. Don't make any mistake."

Lucian and Cyrus came in and shut the door while he was speaking, and Cyrus sat down beside Lazarus on the Davenport, and leaned back wearily.

"You can call yourself what you like," replied Cuthbert, his face a sullen red. "But I know where I belong."

"We're the paid employees of a paper owned by a capitalist." Uncle Lew cocked his head at Cuthbert and smiled his most whimsical smile.

"Oh, dry up!" exploded Lucian, making a long arm and unceremoniously mussing his hair. "What in thunder——"

"Then you don't think, Uncle Lew, that an individual can have the Proletarian point of view without belonging to the Proletariat?" I asked.

"Well, I like to think so," Uncle Lew admitted, the irrepressible twinkle in his eye. "But then what's the matter with sympathising with Benacci, who does belong to the Proletariat, and no question, even if he can bind books by hand."

"Stung!" said Cuthbert. "You can have the advertisement." And he laughed shamefacedly at Uncle Lew.

"Oh, Benacci?" Lucian asked. "Yes; charge that up to me. Whose is the next grievance?"

"Perhaps I'd better go over those statistics if you have the proof handy," suggested Cyrus. "It won't take more than a couple of minutes, and then I'll leave you to your editorial secrets."

We laughed at that, complimenting his discretion.

"The boy's bringing them," said Uncle Lew. "I

guess you'll have to wait. We'll trust you as you're just off for the wilderness."

"Not yet," Cyrus smiled.

"You make a mistake not to go, Cyrus." Uncle Lew's eyes were grave.

"I need to be under authority, I know," Cyrus said.

"I shall never accomplish anything until I am. But I'm not—yet; so I must decide, or undecide, as best I can, a while longer."

Cuthbert and Lazarus were looking at him curiously.

"Then we'll skip the statistics for the moment," said Lucian, "and take up our quarrel over the Reform candidate where we left off last time. Miss Emery's got it in for you and me, Cuthbert; she doesn't like your tone in your report of the last Reform rally, and she's afraid my editorial will hurt Trissy's feelings. And as for Lazarus's critique of his literary output up to date, including the Persian Love Songs—she calls it a savage attack."

"It is," Lazarus agreed, smiling grimly.

I explained that Mr. Lawrence seemed to me too prominent in the number; that it was a strike number and its readers would not be interested, primarily, in *belles-lettres* or Reform politics.

"Unless we can point out the connection between *belles-lettres* and Reform politics, and the strike, which you can't deny we do," interrupted Lucian.

"One would think we had a personal grudge against him," I protested.

There was self-conscious silence and no disclaimer.

"What you would like," grunted Cuthbert,

presently, "would be a merger between the Socialists and the Reformers, and me to step down in favour of Tristram Lawrence. But the party don't work things that way. And if *The Torch* is for Socialism it can't at the same time support the competitive system—which is what Lawrence stands for."

"I do not wish a merger," I contradicted with undue heat. "I am just as keen on exposing the evils of the competitive system as any of you; but I see no reason why *The Torch* should stoop to personalities."

"Of course, your own attitude toward Mr. Lawrence is not coloured by personal feeling," Lucian suggested.

"Because I am still able to remember that he is a scholar and an honourable gentleman, and very much in earnest, even though he does not happen to be fighting on our side? "

"In what sense do you use the term 'honourable gentleman?' " inquired Lazarus.

"In every sense."

His face was impassive and he did not pursue the inquiry. We all avoided each other's eyes.

"If we must bring politics into this strike edition," I continued, "why not expend our ammunition on the machine candidate and his method of raising campaign funds? "

"Of course, there are no personalities involved in that story," remarked Lucian.

I laughed. He had me there. "Still, there is a difference," I insisted.

"You mean," cried Lazarus, "that for the

machine candidate to call himself the friend of the working-man and to get campaign funds from those sweat-shop manufacturers that are to blame for this strike, is more worse than for the Reform candidate to tell the strikers that he is all for pushing the label, on the quiet—when his party is for the open shop? ”

“ What’s that? ”

“ Who gave you that? ”

Lucian and Cuthbert plunged toward the Davenport.

“ He may not realise all that the label means,” said Uncle Lew.

“ Hot air won’t get him the strike vote,” sneered Cuthbert. “ And he can’t *do* anything; because if he don’t know what the label means, the merchants do; they’re not going to let themselves in for a row with the manufacturers.”

“ I get the impression he thinks he can swing his party,” said Lazarus. “ If he says to the strikers, ‘ See how hard I try to get the closed shop for you! See how I am willing to be unpopular with my own constituency for the sake to improve your conditions!’ and to the merchants he gives the wink, that he don’t expect any concessions from them—then he thinks he gets the strike vote, and he don’t lose the merchants’ vote; and his party smiles and says, ‘ You observe how we are open-minded. Our candidate lets us in for more than we expected; we do not go with him all the way; but the situation is unprecedented—he must have a free hand; he is a philanthropist.’ ”

“ Gee, what a scoop!” gloated Cuthbert. “ It’ll queer him with the working-class vote, and with the

moral high-brows; and with his party, too—they'll have to repudiate him to save their face."

"But we aren't going to print it!" I cried, horrified. "Mr. Samson, you must have got your hint of the situation from Miss Aarons; but I know she thinks he will be honest if he consents to approach his merchant-backers. He hadn't consented this morning."

"I do not know what Miss Aarons thinks. She is a deep thinker," he replied politely.

"What she thinks doesn't cut any ice," Cuthbert exclaimed. "We've got the story."

"My God, folks!" said Uncle Lew, "this isn't a game of checkers. If he *could* convert his party to the label, think what it would mean for the strikers! The strike would be off in forty-eight hours."

Lucian sat with his head bent, drawing circles on his blotter.

"Lucian," Uncle Lew said, "you won't stand for this?"

And Lucian looked up at Uncle Lew, and then at his brother. "I want to," he said to Cyrus. Cyrus's head moved a scarcely perceptible No, and a little, tender smile shadowed his lips for the briefest moment.

"I want to," Lucian said to me, defiantly. "*Dio mio*—how I want to!" And to the others, "Fellows, you know I want to; but it's not a gentleman's game."

"I'm not a gentleman," Cuthbert proclaimed hardily. But he hadn't liked to have me tell him so, the night that he walked home with me.

"The instincts of the primitive man are the sane instincts, in crises," Lazarus stated coldly.

"Am I right that the vote stands three to two against printing?" asked Lucian, looking from me to Uncle Lew.—"Then suppose we take up next the article on Syndicalism. The question is, how much shall we take the public into our confidence as to the preparations for the general sympathetic strike?"

"I say tell all we know," Lazarus suggested. "The capitalist won't believe it even if he reads it; and the working-man, he needs to be put wise."

"At Socialist headquarters they recommend a certain degree of reticence," Lucian reminded him.

But I am afraid I did not follow the discussion very closely. My mind would insist upon reverting to Bertha and Tristram, and to his equivocal remark about the label. Had he realised that it was equivocal?

CHAPTER IV

EXPLOSION

Two weeks before the elections the general sympathetic strike was called. It began on a Wednesday, I remember, and there was some discussion in the Central Labour Union as to whether the printers should go out or not; whether it would be more effective to give the public the news of the fight, or to leave it in ignorance, groping helplessly for information. But when they had got the Wednesday afternoon editions off the presses and into the streets, the printers struck work; and with them *The Torch's* men, of course. After Thursday, other cities sent down reporters to glean, but the poor fellows had a hard time getting their stories home, for the telegraph operators were out with the rest and from the start the railway traffic was so blocked—the depots and freight sheds were so choked with goods, perishable and other, which the striking teamsters refused to haul away—that the reaction on the mail and passenger trains was inevitable, and they gave up all attempt to keep to schedule.

We saved the milk for the babies. That was Helen's scheme. Ten of the members of the settlement committee, who could run their own motor cars—the chauffeurs were out—met the milk train on Thursday morning, gave vouchers to the frantic milk dealers, divided the city into districts, and

peddled the milk. Friday morning there were fifty gentlemen with as many automobiles, volunteering for milk routes. But the meat in the cold storage cars spoiled on the sidings for lack of ice; and the cattle and live-stock in the freight pens squealed and grunted and starved, for the stockyards were closed and there was no one to put them out of their misery.

Unorganised labour reaped what harvest it could. The small provision and fruit shops, family affairs run by Greeks or Italians, profited most by the situation. The larger groceries and markets, as well as some of the hardware and drug stores, found themselves unexpectedly blocked by the Retail Clerks Benefit Association, a benevolent organisation not hitherto allied with the union labour, which now declared its sympathy with the Garment Workers by joining the general strike.

Factories shut down all over the city and in the suburbs, and at the request of the Citizens' Reform League the mayor closed the saloons, the unions applauding. Trolley cars had vanished at midnight on the Tuesday. Public cabs were out of commission by Wednesday noon. Thereafter, through all the waiting days and nights that followed, only the men who owned their vehicles drove in our city, and those chose the less-frequented streets. Along the main thoroughfares great crowds stagnated. They moved, these multitudes, but with a glacial slowness; and their eyes were as the eyes of sleep-walkers. At intervals the mounted police rode through their midst, huddling them to right and left. When one heard those wild, relentless hoof-beats coming, one's

heart stopped a moment; one thought of the avalanche. Had it come?

At headquarters the leaders of the strike sat in endless committee. Every day—almost every hour—some one conferred with some one else: the President of the Central Labour Union with the Mayor; the Mayor with the Governor; the Mayor with the Chief of Police; the officers of the National Federation of Labour with the officers of the State Federation; the State Federation with the Head of the Garment Workers, with the Teamsters, with the Tin Plate Workers, with the Shoe Operatives; the Citizens' Reform League with the Head of the Garment Workers; the Head of the Garment Workers with the Citizens' Reform League. The President of the A.B. & C.R.R. with the Mayor. The Presidents of the D.E. & F. and the G.H. & I.R.R.'s with the President of the A.B. & C.; the Citizens' Reform League with the Protestant Episcopal Bishop of the Diocese; the Citizens' Reform League with the heads of social settlements, with the Young Men's Christian Association, with the Consumers' League; the Machine candidate with the Reform candidate; the Suffragists with the Garment Workers; the President of the United States with the Secretary of War. And so on indefinitely.

In the public squares the police were kept busy suppressing stump orators. Here the Socialists got their innings. Processions had a way of forming, unexpectedly, headed by haggard foreigners who sang the *Internationale* or the *Marseillaise*. Once some women smashed the windows of a chocolate factory where a few scabs were working. After the

first two or three days there began to be outbreaks of rowdyism, for which the strikers bore the blame. Once or twice the police lost their heads, and cracked other people's, not wisely but too well. One man died. At night there was thievery in dark streets, and even occasional house-breaking. As the days passed there was a subtle change in the temper of the waiting, idle throngs; something fierce and ugly threatened in those watchful eyes.

"It is because they know they are not going to hold out," Helen said. "No, Mr. Polotsky, no bread to-day. Stale?—No; I wish we had. Nor any codfish. I'm sorry. The wholesale provision men have no teams, you know. We only get what can be brought here from the train yards by private automobile."

Helen and I were giving out rations in one of the commissary stores that had been established earlier in the garment strike. But we had had no new supplies for two days, and the shelves of the shop were almost bare. Men and women stood about, silent, listless, holding their commissary tickets in their hands.

"They're not the stuff that wins," Helen went on. "And they are beginning to suspect it. They're soft yet. It will take another generation, or maybe two, to produce the kind of men and women that can win a general strike. What discipline have these people had? No; no more macaroni. Too bad!"

"What discipline had the mob had in the French Revolution?" I asked. "But they hung on."

"Why, the discipline of want, my dear. They had come to the point where they had nothing more

to lose. Ours are not there yet. The job waits, tantalising. Until they can turn their back on it, or, better still, starve with it hanging, tempting, two inches above their noses, there's nothing for them but failure."

"You don't mean that they are giving in at union headquarters, after only three days?"

"Not at headquarters, naturally." Helen was our delegate to the Central Labour Organisation from the Women's Trade Union League. "But the leaders can't hold them in if they stampede."

"Stampede; after only three days?"

"Well, if you could hear the weak-kneed delegates wrangling, you would think so. There's no use looking so mournful, Clara; you ought to know by this time that the rank and file of trade unionists are not built on heroic lines. Did you really think, for one moment, that they could win a general strike?"

"I don't know," I murmured. "Didn't you?"

She laughed. "I thought they might win a concession or two—nothing very definite—if they didn't alienate the public altogether; which is what they are in a fair way to do now, by their rowdyism."

"Not their rowdyism."

"As long as they can't control it, it will lie at their door. Not that I think we're at the end of our rope yet. The leaders are whistling very loud to keep their courage up, and the public is still fooled. But, my dear, Capital isn't fooled."

"Helen," I cried, "When you say a thing like that, I can't understand why you are not a Socialist."

"Darn Socialism!" said Helen. "What is it doing to help this situation? Butting in with a

candidate for mayor when it knows it hasn't a ghost of a show, just to make mischief and hand the city over to corruption."

"No, Helen; that's not true. They saw a chance, in this strike, to increase their following——"

"A lot of cold-blooded fanatics trafficking in their brothers' misery——"

"Not at all; they are living for the future; they are far-sighted——"

"Well, I'm near-sighted, and I'm living right now——"

"And yet you said yesterday that all these opportunist schemes for temporary relief were perfectly futile—that Cyrus's position was the only logical one: there's got to be a change of heart."

"But then, you see, I'm not logical, and——" her voice softened—"I'm not Cyrus. I haven't a gift for prayer. I can only cobble."

"What else can any of us do? But we can have the vision, too."

"I won't have it, thank you, if it involves tactics that sacrifice the individual."

"Not when it means the ultimate gain of the individual? The law of life is sacrifice, Helen."

"Sacrifice yourself, and welcome, Clara. But who gives you leave to sacrifice me, or Bertha Aarons, or the forty thousand garment workers, to a theory?"

"Ah, but when they are Socialists they will sacrifice themselves," I cried.

"Yes; when! — Meanwhile, suppose you run around the corner, to number six Lincoln Court, and up five flights to the Balderonis'. They happen to

be burying a starved baby as a result of the present crisis. Papa Balderoni, aged twenty-four, is a Socialist of the most violent Italianate variety. He takes cocaine, I think. You won't love him at first sight, but poke the embers of brotherly love in your heart with the word Comrade—oh, magic poker with an insulated handle warranted not to burn the fingers!—and you may be able to bring yourself to the point of lending him the wherewithal for the next meal. If he can find a meal to buy."

I went, in a hurry.

II

In the three rooms of the Balderoni tenement there were gathered some forty or fifty people, members of the other families living in the house, all Italians; and, to my surprise, the majority were men. Some of the women I knew, and they came round me, weeping aloud, gesticulating, all together explaining some outrage whose nature was lost to me in the mazes of Sicilian and Neapolitan dialects.

Four tiny bright red candles, such as one buys for a penny apiece for Christmas trees, illumined the soap-box which was the baby's bier.

"But they are not blessed, *Signorina*; *che vuole*, they are not blessed," the women wailed.

The mother, kneeling by the baby's head, suddenly flung herself face downwards on the floor and beat upon the rotten boards with her hands and screamed terribly, so that a number of men who were in the inner room came crowding to the door and stood and watched me as I tried to lift her up. And one of

those men was Lucian. He shouldered his way past the others through the door, and he and I together lifted the woman and wiped her bloody mouth, where she had struck it against the floor.

"I'm glad you've come," he said. "I heard about it through some of the men in the local. He won't let her have a priest to bury the baby."

"He must!" said I.

"Well, I think I'm talking him round. He knows I don't love the priests any better than he does—but we must concede something to the sensibilities of our women—that's my tack." And in Italian to the woman, "*Coraggio!* The good God will not permit that the *bambino* be buried without the rites of the Church. *Coraggio!*"

Her husband came and stood above her, sullenly. "If he comes—that animal—I do not remain. Choose!"

The other women chorused their indignation; but his wife only lifted her streaked face and murmured, "*Grazie!*"

He was a white-faced, sickly-looking young fellow, with a twitching hand which he brushed frankly, now, across his eyes, as he stooped over the baby.

"There's a vicious row threatening," Lucian whispered to me. I had taken the woman into my arms and she was sobbing softly, her face buried in my breast. "*Poverina,*" said Lucian, "weep, weep! The *bambino* will await you in the bosom of God." And again, to me, "There's a rumour that the G.H. & I. railroad is bringing in a train-load of strike-breakers at midnight, and these fellows are cooking up a riot."

"O Signore," I said to the dogged young husband, "will you not speak a kind word to this poor wife who suffers such anguish through her love for you and your child?"

"Not through me does she suffer, Signorina," the man answered sulkily, "but through the superstitions of a greedy Church that sells Jesus Christ to the people."

"Matteo, God hears! Do not blaspheme against God!" his wife cried, flinging out of my arms into his.

"I do not," he said, not unkindly. "I blaspheme against the Church, which separates the people from God. Women do not understand these things."

"Why not go for a priest," I suggested to Lucian.

"Cyrus has. Come over in this corner while they make up, and let me tell you. These men are planning to derail the track a few miles out. Hush, don't say anything, don't look anything! Some of them are a part of a gang that re-laid the track not so long ago; they know just where they can do most mischief. Don't get so white, Clara; nothing will really happen; nothing ever does. Would you like a glass of water, dear?"

"No; I'm not white."

"You're a lovely pink, now." He stood looking in my face in a way that made me get pinker and pinker—as if he'd quite forgotten that he was talking about something else.

"What shall you do?" I asked.

"Do?—Oh!—Help me to think! It means that my day's work is cut out for me; and I had planned something quite different. Uncle Lew came to the

office this morning chockful of a scheme to print a four-page number of *The Torch* on that hand-press we bought with the outfit and never use. I left him setting up type. I'm afraid you'll have to get it out without me, now. We can sell it to-morrow afternoon, Sunday, you know; when everybody will be hanging round, more than half inclined to go to work Monday morning. It may brace them up and keep them out a bit longer."

"I'll go there from here," I said. "But where are you going?"

"I've got to have a little more talk with these fellows first. What would you do, Clara?—inform the police?" He waited, anxious-eyed.

"Must we tell the police?" I questioned. "These are our people. This is our side in this war——"

"O Beloved!" he said.

I suppose we were in that little garlic-reeking tenement room with the dead baby and the soap-box and the four red, unblessed candles and the weeping father and mother. I suppose women were moaning and rocking their arms. I suppose the snarling wrangle of men's voices seeped through the door's crack from the inner room, intermittently. I did not hear any of these things. I heard Lucian say, "O Beloved!" and we were looking at each other after that—I do not know how long. My spirit and Lucian's had discovered that they were one spirit. "This is marriage and he knows," my heart said.

But what I said to Lucian, after the long while, was—"How not to betray them? We've got our chance."

"The union leaders must handle it," he answered

decisively. "It's their job. I'm going into the other room now, to make these men see it that way; some of them belong to unions—they're all sorts. They've got to submit their plan to the Central Committee. If this is war, the head of the army is the one to plan the campaign; enlisted men can't go off and raid on their own hook. And the President of the Central Labour Union will never stand for train-wrecking; that I know."

"I'll go in with you," I said.

"No, dear, there's nothing to be afraid of."

"They won't understand, Lucian. Some of them won't distinguish between the police and the committee of the unions. They are so ignorant. And these Italian Socialists are so violent, so anarchistic. Any hindrance will seem to them betrayal. I'd rather be with you."

"They'd know why, Clara. I couldn't insult them by distrust like that. Besides, I don't distrust them. I know my Italians. The obvious place for you is here, with the poor mother. There's the priest now."

Cyrus and a Franciscan missionary friar came in from the stairway, and Lucian hooked his arm through Balderoni's and drew him into the inner room.

"It's all arranged," Cyrus whispered. "Mother let me have her motor to carry the baby to the church and the cemetery.—What's the matter in there? Can't they be quiet five minutes?" For a tumult of tongues had broken loose in the other room, blotting out the priestly mumble—even the laments of the women.

"*Fratelli miei!*" Lucian's voice struggled through

the clamour. The priest, rapt in the oblivion of prayer, continued to move dumb lips.

"What is it?" asked Cyrus. He looked from the priest to the door, took a step toward the door, hesitated, and went down on his knees beside the kneeling women.

I tiptoed around them, knocked to no effect upon the door, and opened it a little way. The raging noise bellowed in my face—then hushed abruptly.

"I must speak to Mr. Emery a moment, before we go to the burial," I explained, and squeezed into the room. The men were silent, staring at me while Lucian and I talked together hurriedly.

"About this hand-press edition of *The Torch*—what am I to say at the office?"

"Oh—that!—Yes. You and Uncle Lew will have to put it through, Clara. There won't be any time for proof-reading. Cuthbert was at me again, before the general strike shut down, about Trissy. I'm afraid it's true that Trissy is facing both ways. Still—if it comes up—remember, I vote against it. And, Clara, hold a column free till midnight—no, better say two o'clock—in case I have something to report about this affair. I hope we can either stop it off short in committee, or come out gloriously as guardians of the public welfare against sporadic rowdyism. But I don't know. I'm afraid only force will block this crowd.

"I shall be anxious," I said.

And his answer was a radiant smile. "Isn't it great!" he whispered "We're in the real thing at last."

III

After we buried the baby, Cyrus dropped me at *The Torch* office, where I found Uncle Lew and Lazarus and Cuthbert fussing about among the presses.

"Well, Clara, I guess I've busted our newest linotype machine," Uncle Lew announced. "It looks so easy when that little blue-eyed Mulhaley girl plays her five-finger exercises on it, I thought I'd save time. But I haven't. The good old Ruskinian way for mine. Me and William Morris believe in hand labour. It'll be slow.—The last column of type I set up was for the farewell number of *The Message of New Hope*. How many years?"

He was smiling when he said it; but as he turned away and bent over the case, he sighed.

"Miss Emery, you know where is kept the keys of the store-room where is ink—where paper is?" Lazarus Samson's English was deserting him in the emergency.

I suggested the absent foreman's pocket, which did not help much.

"Where's Lucian? Why isn't he on his job?" growled Cuthbert.

But when I told him, he too wanted to be off.

"No, you don't, young man!" said Uncle Lew. "You sit right down here and dig up the capital letters from this mess of type. They mixed it before they walked out. That shows a trusting spirit, doesn't it? S'pose they thought we'd get in scab labour?"

"But the reporting's my job," protested Cuthbert. "Lucian's no journalist—he won't know——"

"Everything's your job to-day," interrupted Uncle Lew. "Find me a capital T, six-point. The trouble with you is you're too highly specialised, Cuthbert; now's your opportunity to remedy that defect and be an all-round man, like me and William Morris. Have you found that T?—That's eight-point, son, I said six."

"Weren't they right, after all?" I asked. "Aren't we scab labour? Ought we to be doing this?"

"I thought you'd bite," shouted Uncle Lew. "It's a delicate question:—Are we?—ought we?—What do you say?—All the a's in one pile, Cuthbert, all the b's in another, like the little girl and the mixed breakfast foods in the fairy tale. That's the ticket. Tip 'em out.—Well, Clara?"

"I asked you," I said, laughing.

"And my answer is—this"—he waved his hands around at the confusion in the room. "I'm like the express train going past the flag-station at New Hope—I don't even hesitate."

"But if it isn't scab labour, what is it, Uncle Lew?"

"There is such a thing as a distinction without a difference, my dear. We are not depriving any man of his job by doing this; we are not taking away any man's wages, since we don't get paid for it. And the money we take in for this number of *The Torch* will go to the Strikers' Relief Fund. There will be no kick coming from the unions.—Now, if your conscience has gone bye-low, take off your hat and run your blue pencil through the Russo-American idioms in Lazarus's account of that poor striker's

funeral procession.—Wf. Cuthbert, do you know what that means?—Yes, dear boy, *wrong font*, exactly. Try my spectacles.”

Thus Uncle Lew, in that whimsical voice of his that even Cuthbert’s defiance could not withstand.

Later, when I had gone into my own office, Lazarus came in and stood by my desk, listening to my suggestions absently.

“If you permit me, I ask you an impertinent question,” he said at last.

“I don’t believe it will be impertinent, Mr. Samson,” I replied gently.

“Well, I don’t know,” he returned. And then—
“You wasn’t ever engaged to Mr. Lawrence?”

“Oh, no!” I blushed at the over-vehemence of my tone.

“But you know him pretty well?”

“I have known him a long time.”

“You think he is not bluffing the workers when he says he asks the merchants to use the label? You think he believes in the closed shop?”

“I think he has always been an honourable gentleman, Mr. Samson.”

“Now, here is a conversation a man sold me. He was cleaning the windows in that office, and he heard them. I wrote it.” Lazarus handed me several scribbled pages of yellow paper and stood waiting.

It was an incoherent report of conversation between Tristram Lawrence and the head of one of the big department stores.

“Then the Reform candidate, he says, ‘I want to be able to tell them I’ve asked you, that’s all.’ And then they looks at each other, and old Wingate he laughs,

and the Reform candidate he smiles like he had a bad taste in his mouth. And old Wingate says, 'Of course, Mr. Lawrence, if I and the other members of the Citizens' League didn't know you were as sound as the rest of us on this issue, we shouldn't be supporting your nomination.' 'Of course,' says the Reform candidate, 'I understand.' 'And when we give up the right of an employer to engage whatever man he pleases at whatever price he can get him for,' says old Wingate, 'we strike the death-blow of the republic.' 'Yes,' says the Reform candidate, kind of slow, 'I suppose we do.' Then the old man looks at him sharp and says, 'Look here, Lawrence, there's talk of your being infected by Socialism.' And Lawrence says, 'You know I'm a member of the committee for relief for strikers' wives and children, and the young woman who led out this strike is a Socialist. I've seen something of her in committee work. I suppose that's where the talk arises.' 'Yes, I dare say,' the old man says, indifferent. 'Fine-looking girl, eh?—So I've heard. Well, I'm glad there are some compensations.' 'It's a peculiar situation,' Lawrence says. Then old Wingate claps him on the shoulder and tells him, 'I don't know who is better fitted to handle it than you. It's all right. You've asked me—urged me—and I'm considering it seriously.' ”

There was more, but that was the gist of it.

“What does Miss Aarons say?” I asked.

“I didn't show her this, yet. But to everything she only says I make it a personal matter. We don't speak to each other for two days now, because we disagreed. What I want to know—shall we print this?”

"Oh, but that was settled days ago," I cried.

"You think so? With these new data?"

I stared at him, frightened.

"I don't wish to print, you understand," he explained. "I am personal about her; she is right. I don't like her name with his in the paper. And if she gets mad in a hurry, reading this, she will kill him. It is probable. I don't want that. You see how it is personal with me? She is so right; I must remember only the cause, not her. I fail, because I am personal. But if you say to print——?"

"We can't!" I cried. "We can't! It is so vulgar; so horrid. *The Torch* does not print scandal."

"*The Torch* prints the truth."

"He is an honourable gentleman in a very difficult position——"

"He is in a difficult position, yes."

"And who knows how much of this is malicious—garbled?"

He shrugged.

"We should give him the benefit of the doubt," I insisted.

"I rely to your judgment," he said, and left me alone with those scribbled yellow sheets.

And I was a coward.

I tried to persuade myself that *The Torch* could not touch this sort of thing. But where does one draw the line in political campaigns, as to what the public has a right to know about the political morale of a candidate? And *The Torch* was supporting union labour and the closed shop, which Tristram was trying to betray. "Not trying to," I said. "He doesn't mean it that way." And *The Torch* was the

organ of the Socialist Party. "But I don't belong to the party," I said irrelevantly. I cannot forgive myself for saying that. Other thoughts crowding in at the time obscured the implication it held; but the words flashed back into consciousness like a shameful blow in the face. I had been quite as ready as Tristram to take advantage of a false position. No doubt he, too, did not realise what his action meant till afterwards. It is as if conscience were absent-minded, sometimes.

A couple of hours later I was still trying to think that I had not made up my mind what to do, when Cuthbert came in to tell me that three of *The Torch's* four pages were set up. Had I anything else that must go in?

"This?" His hand went out to the yellow sheets.

So did mine. I covered them, and crumpled them together. "No, not this!"

"We're leaving two columns open for Lucian; and Uncle Lew is setting up the striker's funeral now, and that baby's obsequies you sent down," he said. "Regular tear-starter, that. But we ought to have something to run in at the last minute, just supposing Lucian's train wreck fizzles out."

I suggested going again to the settlement, where there were always new developments. But he scouted the proposal.

"Settlement!" he snarled. "I mean something vital. We've got enough philanthropic gush."

"Cuthbert, once for all," I said, "understand that I am quite as convinced of the futility of settlements as you are; indeed, I am more convinced, for I'm not afraid of what they can do."

"I afraid!" he blustered—"I ignore them!"

"I haven't observed it. But my suggestion has nothing to do with philanthropic gush. You know, as well as I do, that if you want to get the latest movements of the garment strikers, you have to go to Helen at the settlement."

"Yes; and if I want to get the latest news of Tristram Lawrence and Bertha Aarons," he retorted, "I can find them there, too, any time of day, sitting holding hands on a sofa behind the door."

"Cuthbert!"

"I say it's so! It's time we threw the flashlight on the Reform candidate, I tell you. We've got enough to go on."

"Lucian told me, the last thing, that he would not have it," I said.

He clucked his tongue against his teeth impatiently, and snapped his fingers. "Oh, well, if he's printing a weekly guide on etiquette, he can count me out."

"Cuthbert," I began, "just because Mr. Lawrence is running against you in this campaign you ought to be the more careful not to indulge in personalities about him in print."

"Yes, that's politics, isn't it?" he retorted. "I'm no gentleman—as you once remarked. I'm also no lady, thank God! I'll get ahead of him and Lucian too before I'm done. Lucian can keep me out of print, maybe; but he can't muzzle me."

Since childhood I have always been moved to preach to Cuthbert. All the prig in me comes out when I am with him. Now I said—"You are so angry against all the world. It is dreadful. Your

anger will destroy you, Cuthbert. If Lucian were your bitterest enemy—if he had hounded you to disgrace—you could not speak of him more violently. You and he differ on a matter of journalistic policy, that is all—and yet——”

“That is all?” he said, suddenly quiet. “All?—If it were not for Lucian, you——”

“Hush!” I said. And he burst out into boisterous, heart-breaking laughter.

“And I must knuckle under because he gave me his old clothes in college,” he shouted. “I must lick his foot and give up the woman I love——”

I stood up. “There was never a question of such a thing!” I cried. “How dare you?”

“I say, if it had not been for Lucian you would——”

“Leave the room at once!” I remember how strange my voice sounded.

“I say, he doesn’t even know you are in love with——”

“Then I shall go.” Could I see to go? I wondered.

He put out his hand to keep me, dropped it, and shrank aside.

“I say, he’s a fool! My God, I could——”

So I went—forgetting those loose yellow pages.

IV

It was after eight o’clock when I got home that evening. Uncle Lew and I had had a dinner of stale bread and strong cheese bought at a fabulous price from a corner grocery, and eaten among the presses

by the light of three monstrously expensive tallow candles. While we were eating, Cuthbert looked in at the door. His face flared, wild and defiant, among the shadows, then disappeared.

"Come in and have a bite," Uncle Lew called. "There's plenty."

But we heard him clattering downstairs.

He was standing at the front door when we came down later.

"How about a filler, in case Lucian's row doesn't pan out?" he asked. "Because if you haven't one, I think I—" The shakiness of his voice seemed to me natural, under the circumstances; but Uncle Lew turned and looked at him and said:—

"What's that?—Oh, filler? Yes, there's one on my desk that will do; an interview with a button-sewer. I'll set it up for emergency when I have seen the lady editor safe home."

"I'll set it up," Cuthbert cried, starting back up the stairs.

"Do you know what's the matter with him?" Uncle Lew asked, shutting the heavy front door and trying the knob. And to my brief "Yes" he replied hastily, "Oh, very well!" and changed the subject.

The streets were unpleasantly dark, and Uncle Lew hurried me along on pretence of needing to get back to his work. We had an electric lamp that we flashed now and then. Occasionally we met some one with a lantern, and there were policemen with official bulls'-eyes at more or less uncertain intervals. Once, down a side street there were screams, and scuttling as of gigantic rats.

"Now's the time I regret your Franciscanism,

Clara, and wish you had an auto of your own," Uncle Lew said.

"I hope I shouldn't be riding in it now, even if I did own one," I retorted. "Even Cyrus wished he owned one to-day; but it was for a funeral." And we laughed.

The showy vestibule of our apartment house was illumined by one large oil lamp with a tin reflector behind it. Uncle Lew left me there, and I had started up the unaccustomed stairs when a reluctant voice below me said, "Miss Emery," and looking down I saw a shame-faced elevator-boy.

"Why, Joe; have you given in?" I asked.

"Yes'm," he opened the door of the elevator cage.

"All the boys?"

"Yes'm." He seemed to lose himself in depressing reflections.

I again began to climb the stairs.

"Miss Emery, it's running, you know!" he called up in surprise.

"Not for me, Joe," I said.

His mouth fell open. He watched me till I came to the first landing; then I saw him go into his cage, shut the door, and sit down with his elbows on his knees and his chin in his hands. He reminded me humorously of Rodin's *Thinker*. I climbed the remaining seven flights of stairs with a whimsical feeling of amusement.

Tristram Lawrence was in our drawing-room trying to induce Cyrus to speak at a mass-meeting which, it seemed, the Citizens' Relief Committee was hurriedly planning for Sunday afternoon. Within the last year or two people had waked up to the fact

that Cyrus could speak, and he was beginning to be very much in demand, although oftener than not he would refuse. Tristram was assuring him, now, that he might talk Tolstoyism, non-resistance, Christianity, whatever he pleased—so he struck the note of Peace. Brotherhood—that was the motif to embroider. The present situation was furnishing a dramatic example of our dependence upon one another. Peace, conciliation, arbitration—all of them hobbies of Cyrus's; surely he would not refuse?

He consented at last and made his escape from the room, and Tristram developed the plan of the meeting for my Cousin Pauline and me.—The note of appeal, so far as I could make out, was to be prominent; appeal to the strikers. The discomfort of the guiltless public was to be stressed.—Guiltless! Having left undone the things it ought to have done?—But I did not interrupt. Along with the veiled appeal for mercy there was to go, also veiled, a threat. Through the efforts of the Reform candidate, whose sympathy for the cause of organised labour was so well known, the mayor had, thus far, been persuaded not to call for troops, but—— A list of those organisations which had agreed to go back to work on Monday morning would be read.—I ventured to question the policy of this, and Tristram made a note of it. Arbitration was to be urged, and the meeting was to close with the proposal of names for a committee of arbitration, six names: two from the unions, two from the employers, two from the public.—“We mean to make Cyrus one,” Tristram said, “and a woman, perhaps Miss Baldwin, the other.”—The

strike, of course, was to be called off pending the decision, which would hardly be reached, Tristram thought, until after the elections. I reminded him that a somewhat similar proposal for arbitration had already been rejected by the strikers early in the Garment Workers' strike, but he was evidently counting on the temper of the meeting to push public opinion in that direction; especially was he counting on Cyrus. I observed that he had no Socialist speakers on his programme.

At this point, my Cousin Pauline, always a little dazed in the presence of practical detail, excused herself.

"I proposed Lucian's name," Tristram exclaimed, "but the mayor thought——"

"Oh, but Lucian wouldn't have spoken, anyway," said I. "He wouldn't approve of getting that sort of peace."

"Arbitration?" queried Tristram. "What's contrary to Socialism there?"

"It looks like hoodwinking the people, to tide over till after the elections."

"You're very fond of that word—'hoodwink.'"

"What word would you have me use?"

"Clara," he was leaning his elbows on his knees, bowing his head, and he pushed his fingers through his thin hair. "My faith in myself is at a low ebb to-night; I'd like to think you keep your faith in me."

The unaccustomed gesture had left him dishevelled. I discovered that his was the type that looks ineffective when its hair is mussed.

"But I never did think you would win," I stammered.

"I'm not talking about the election—I mean faith in me, the man."

I said nothing to this.

When he spoke again he shaded his eyes with his hand, as if the light annoyed him; but there was not much light.

"If I had known—all that it would involve—I presume—I should not have gone in.—But I am in, now." He drooped backward slowly into the deep chair and mused a few moments, with eyelids down-cast. Then he rubbed his fingers against each other with a delicate gesture of repugnance, and said, "I hope you will never know what it feels like to touch pitch." And then, "It was in your cause, you know; the Cause of the People. You probably hear all sorts of lies about me. I can see by your face that you do. Is it too much to ask you to believe that, nevertheless, I am disinterested?"

"You want to win," I reminded him.

"To give the people what I believe to be a better government. But—I labour under the disadvantage of having been trained for literature, not for life. To-night I am ready to admit, to you, that I ought to have stayed in literature. But it is not my fault that I didn't, Clara; you were in life."

"Then you were not disinterested," I remarked.

"Would you want a man to be wholly disinterested—if you loved him?"

"I should want him not to try to deceive himself, or me, as to his own motives."

"He must be superhuman, then. No man ever yet fathomed his own motives."

"I distrust such a convenient doctrine."

He got up, his greyhound face suddenly ashy, and smoothing his hair with one hand, felt for the chair-arm unsteadily with the other. "After that, how can I presume to ask you the question a man asks the woman he would most honour—if there is no honour in me?"

"Oh!" I whispered, covering up my own face, "I did not say that."

"Clara!—you will listen?"

"No, no!" I cried; but he would not be stopped.

"I could defend myself"—the distressful tremor in his voice sent the tears raining through my fingers. "But I make no defence to you. I love you. And because I love you I have tried to do something I was not fit to do. But I'll keep at it until I am fit—if you will marry me, Clara."

"If I loved you," I said then, and I tried to be gentle, "perhaps I could be happy to marry you on those terms. I am afraid I should delude myself into thinking that I could teach you to care for the things that I care for—if I loved you. But—I don't love you."

V

After he had gone, and I had dried my eyes and got hold of myself, there were lengths of evening stretching still ahead, full of dread imaginings. Lucian had warned me not to expect him before midnight, if then. What had happened in those long afternoon hours since he left me, I wondered. What was happening now, in that city murk? I remember I went from window to window, straining into the unusual darkness restlessly. No bright, blinking garlands, no

streaming ribbons of light, decked the River Way. At sullen intervals along the shore blear-eyed lanterns kept watch. The black vagueness of the three bridges streaked the dim, palpitating water. We had stripped our great courtesan of her jewels.

"Have you noticed the stars?" Cyrus said, behind me. "They get their chance to-night."

I made room for him in the window, and he opened it and kneeling down laid his head on the sill, so that he looked sidewise up at the sky. "This way you quicken them and shut the city out," he said. And I knelt down too, and laid my head beside his on the sill.

"You know, don't you, that I should be with him, if I knew where he was?" he asked, after a little silence.

"Yes, dear," I answered.

"But one finds out nothing in this chaos. There is no knowing which railroad they're coming in on. And without the telephone we are so helpless."

I moved my head in acquiescence, and after another star-hung silence, he said, in his quietest voice—"If I could have gone in his stead."

I am glad I put my hand out and touched his shoulder, humanly, tenderly.

These Umbrian nights when I cannot sleep, I come up to the loggia and lay my cheek against the cool parapet, and say over and over the things I might have said to comfort him that other night. I think of so many things to say, now. I shut my eyes that I may see again his dear head lying beside mine; but my voice goes seeking out among the stars.

"If I could have gone in his stead," he said; and

then in the comfortless stillness, "No; I must not covet even his suffering."

And I—withdrew my hand from his shoulder.

I remember so well how his coat wrinkled across the back as he got off his knees and went to the door. I remember the little straggle of hair that stood out from the crown of his head.

"I shall be getting my to-morrow's speech in shape," he said, "if you need me. I shan't go to bed.—But you won't need me."

It was eleven then, and I got out my diary and wrote the day into it, and spent a good deal of time trying to justify myself to myself for not having consulted Uncle Lew about Tristram's interview with the department store man. It would have been so simple to consult Uncle Lew—but conscience said, "You were afraid to consult him, he sees so clear." I did not write that in the diary, but I will write it here. In the diary I stressed the fact that Lucian had told me to cast his vote *against* — but against what? Against facts that the public had a right to know? Did Lucian mean me to interpret him that way? Suppose I had put him in the wrong with the party, by my cowardice? And suppose he could never come back to set himself right?—Suppose he never came back? I sat a long time motionless in the clutch of the intolerable thought.

I had not re-read that record in my diary until yesterday, here at the villa, in the cypress avenue. The ancient serried trees, motionless in their illimitable vista, stretch dark and unending, like the hours before Lucian came home.

By two o'clock I could no longer sit still, but I

dared not let myself pace the floor. I hunted up a dust-cloth and dusted the drawing-room: all my Cousin Pauline's little silver gimcracks, all the picture-frames and the chair rungs and the piano keys. I was wiping off the books when I heard his key in the hall-door, his voice and Cyrus's mingling in a brief, excited whisper. "Yes, all safe," I heard, and "Clara's waiting."

His linen collar had been torn off the button at one side; his left coat-sleeve hung ripped from cuff to armhole; there was a muddy splash on the front of his shirt, a muddy streak across his forehead; his hair flashed every way; his eyes——

I heard Cyrus shut the drawing-room door and tiptoe away, down the hall.

"I mustn't touch you; I'm so dirty," Lucian whispered.

And I whispered—"I don't mind."

Presently—I don't know when—he said: "Where were we all these years?" And when I did not answer—"Did you know, Clara?"

"Know what?"

"That it was love from the beginning?"

"No; there are some things one does not tell one's self."

"Ah—you!" he sighed. "No one else could say it that way."

I liked to have him say that, even though it may not be true.

"What happened?" I asked, touching his torn sleeve.

"Oh, everything—and nothing. At trade union

headquarters they were not too happy over my news. Most of them would rather have been left in ignorance. The bigger men on the executive committee were with me, of course, but the others were for hands off. "And let two or three or four hundred men go down an embankment to destruction!" I shouted. I was red hot. One said, 'It's war.' One said, 'It's not our responsibility, these Italians are not unionised.' One of their Socialists said, 'And you say you stand for the class war; they could read you out of the party for this.' I said, 'Let them!—I don't care a damn.' I didn't handle it very well, I was too mad. Neither did the chairman. We were hammering at it for four hours and then we lost it by one vote. They wouldn't interfere. 'Too bad!' the chairman said, 'but if you hustle you can still put the police on to it in time.' That Socialist Unionist didn't say anything; he just looked at me and smiled his class-conscious smile. 'I can wave a red lantern on a railroad track as well as a policeman,' I said. 'I shan't waste time telling the police. And you, comrade,' I said to the smiler, 'go down to the Socialist headquarters and tell them I've gone out on the G.H.I. tracks to prevent the slaughter, if I can, of three or four hundred proletarians. Proletarians, do you hear, you fool? members of the labouring class so befuddled and degraded by the iniquities of the present industrial system that they don't know they're your brothers and mine. Proletarians of all lands, unite! you say. Are you going to bid these poor devils unite after you've pitched them over the precipice? Class-conscious—you!' I didn't wait for his answer."

He laughed and, linking his arm in mine, began to walk up and down the drawing-room.

"Beloved, can you hear it chant, and shout, and sing," he whispered, "chant, and shout, and laugh, and sob, and sing?—My blood leaps to the rhythm of it. All the rage and despair and brutality of it—all the bright brotherhood of it; all the near failure and far seen triumph of it. All the anguish wrapped round in the victorious laughter of God. Listen!"

We stood still together, in the middle of the room.

"And in the heart of it, Beloved, in the still place at the heart of the crashing discords and distraught harmonies, this singing love of ours—earnest of all the oneness that shall be."

"I hear," I said. And I turned and looked into his eyes, and drew him to me, with my hands on his shoulders. So we listened. But soon he leaned to me and kissed my eyes and said:—

"No; put the thought away from us, dear heart. I shall never sing it; I shall never write it. Taillefer sang the Song of Roland before Hastings; but when the fight was on who had ears to listen, who had breath to sing? The battle sang itself."

"But when it is over," I pleaded.

"Emotion recollected in tranquillity?" he smiled. "When it is over—oh, long before set of sun, my darling, long before this long, long strife is ended, you and I shall be lying dead upon the field."

I think my eyes still pleaded, for again he kissed them. "There is not enough of me to fight and sing, both," he said. "I choose to fight. You and I, Beloved, choose that I shall fight. Say it! I want to hear you say it."

"I choose—that you shall fight," I said through my tears.

"And when I'm restive—as I am to-night, with the imperative desire to sing it—you must crush my egotism with what, I suspect, is the modest, salutary truth, that I'm not big enough to sing it, even if I would."

"No; that is not the truth!" I cried.

"We shall never be sure, dear. That's my hair shirt. It scratches healthily. But you haven't heard the end of my story.—I wasted half an hour trying to borrow a motor to take me out there. Gasolene is running short in this beleaguered town, did you know it? And finally I set out over the tracks for an indefinite spot eight miles, or perhaps farther, beyond the city. It was half-past five then. At half-past eight I did get a four-mile lift in a passing motor; and after that it wasn't safe to leave the ties as I didn't know just where they would be cut. I had my electric flash-light with me, and three red lanterns; but I didn't dare use a light for fear of giving myself away, and I almost ran into the wreckers in the darkness. Then I dogged them and found that they were waiting for an eleven o'clock accommodation to pass, so as not to wreck anything earlier than the midnight express. They derailed the track near the middle of a trestle. Yes—fiendish; but then——. I had only half an hour and I wanted to make sure they didn't block me, so I groped along under the trestle and up the embankment, and then beyond, for half a mile, before I ventured to light a lantern. Two of them I set on the track, about a hundred yards apart, out of sight of each other, round a curve,

You see, I was afraid they would patrol the track. They did, but not far enough. I kept the third lantern to wave, if they should find the other two. I tied a message to each lantern, 'Trestle derailed, half a mile beyond.' I never expect to enjoy myself so much again!"

"If those Italians had found you—Oh, Lucian!"

"But you see, they didn't!"

"Every one will say you ought to have warned the police—that it was your duty as a citizen."

"Yes, I know. And according to all precedents of conventional morality, I ought. But think how it would have complicated matters—how it would have increased hard feeling. If there had been no other way, that would have been another matter. But there was this way. I watched the conductor and brakesman come down the track, after the train stopped. They went out on the trestle and found the break. I suppose the train is still out there, and the strike-breakers. I crawled up to the turnpike after that, and presently along came a motor from town, and slowed up and looked me over; and that grinning Socialist got out and said, 'Is that you, comrade? Are we too late to lend a hand?' And I said, 'Repented, did you? Then take me back to *The Torch* office double quick.' So they did. I left Uncle Lew setting up the story. It's not much over half a column, but Cuthbert said he had a filler ready for the rest of the space. He was going to send Uncle Lew to bed and do the press work when it was all set up. They made me come home. I think Uncle Lew knew you'd be anxious."

"How did you write it up?" I asked.

“ Oh, quite from the outside, as it would appear to the trainmen. A war-measure—stressing the humanitarian character of the warning. The inference would be that the wreckers had given it, of course, though I didn’t say they did. I also stated that the unions disclaimed responsibility; the wrecking had evidently been done by private persons and not under the direction of organised labour, ‘ which made the care displayed for human life all the more remarkable,’ etc., etc. It will make the unions want to kick themselves for not having had a hand in it.”

“ Now you must go to bed,” I urged.

“ And you. Dearest, don’t look at me like that; as if I were a hero. There is something on my conscience, unheroic, I must tell you. About Tristram——”

“ Oh, Tristram! ” I said, “ and on mine.”

“ You mean——”

“ No; not quite what you think——”

“ What do I think? ”

“ Tell me to-morrow.”

CHAPTER V

CONFLAGRATION

I

I DO not have premonitions of misfortune. I often plan and live through in imagination the possible deaths of friends and relatives; but this is a literary, not a psychic trait. And Lucian is like me. On that last Sunday of the general strike we went down to the mass meeting almost gaily, unshadowed by any tragic omen. Somehow, at the moment, victory for the strikers seemed inevitable, and I think we had forgotten that personal grief could touch us. No doubt our own individual happiness, so new and absorbing, created the illusion.

The immense hall was filling rapidly when we arrived. It was a grey, misty afternoon, and people brought the damp and the mud in with them. The place reeked with wet rubber and moist humanity. We sat in the centre, some ten or twelve rows from the front, and congratulated ourselves on being so near the speakers. But later, how intolerably far away it seemed! I had been invited to sit on the platform, but had refused—to my Cousin Pauline's annoyance.

"This is surely the time to take your stand with your own people," she complained that morning at the breakfast table.

"And so I do," I said.

"The fanatical Socialist," the marchese smiled indulgently.

And I acquiesced with, "If you like."

"No; your true fanatic is always a party member," Lucian teased, "and you reverse the biblical phrase—you are of the party but not in it."

"It is your level-headed fanatic who is fanaticism," said Cyrus, gently, "and that is Clara."

"And you, too!" laughed his brother.

"Darling," said my Cousin Pauline, "there is no such word as *fanaticissimus*."

But before the mass meeting was over I would have given much to be upon the platform.

It seemed as if the whole city were crushed into that huge, ill-smelling hall. Long before the hour every seat was taken on the floor and in the gallery; the high window sills were filled, the walls were lined with people standing. At the doors, they said, the pressure was intense. Despite the police, crowds surged up the aisles, and, once in, could not be got out.

"Stand up and take a look!" Lucian said. "It's tremendous!"

The men and women immediately around us were Italians; we knew many of them—faces that flashed and lowered, restless shoulders, restless hands; the young girls looking out half-starved from underneath their big, be-feathered hats; the young men furtive or insolent—but always with a pathetically friendly smile for us.

The Slavic faces were perhaps in the majority; their smouldering eyes were everywhere; and every-

where were the ferret looks of watchful Jews. Heavy Irish trade unionists elbowed and shoved their way through the crowd. I recognised a labour leader here and there, usually in low-voiced, emphatic colloquy with some button-holed henchman. And dotted all about the hall there were those other faces, mingled of intensest curiosity and secret apprehension—the faces of the American upper class. On every side I caught their unwinking, excited gaze. I caught it two seats behind us, and after a staring moment it nodded and smiled, and was Nicholas Richards and his pretty wife.

“Great show, isn’t it!” he seemed to say. We couldn’t hear his voice for the general rumbling.

Presently he beckoned, leaning toward us over intervening shoulders, and we bent near enough to hear him murmur, “If a cog slips there’ll be a massacre. Jinks! I’m scared, and I don’t care who knows it. I wish I’d left my wife at home.”

We could only nod and smile our reassurance.

“There’s Uncle Lew waving in the gallery!” exclaimed Lucian. “That means the paper’s ready—he was bound to get it out for the meeting.”

“Something is the matter with him,” I said. “What is he trying to tell us? He looks so disturbed. Why does he point to his copy?”

“Oh, I suppose it’s set up in a muddle,” Lucian laughed. “Cuthbert did all the last part—worked all night and wouldn’t let Uncle Lew stay. I shouldn’t be surprised if half the type were upside down.”

“It is not like him to take that sort of thing seriously,” I objected. “There is something real the matter.”

"I wonder if they're selling outside?" Lucian started up. "I wonder if I can get a copy?"

But I warned him that he would never get in again, and he reluctantly sat down beside me. Then—

"Clara," he said after a few minutes of silence, "I'm afraid *The Torch* ought to show up Tristram Lawrence. I'm afraid it's disloyal to the party not to print what I know——"

"What you know?" I repeated.

"Yes; within the last two days I've got hold of pretty good evidence that he's crooked. That's why my conscience troubles me. I've been trying to persuade myself that it's the sort of thing a gentleman can't touch. But I don't know—if I hadn't been jealous of him I think I might have looked at it the other way round, and known that I owed it to the city, to the party, to clean politics everywhere——"

"Jealous of him!" said I.

He glanced down, sidewise at me, ruefully. "I thought—I thought——" he said. The colour rushed up his face, and mine.

"Don't you see?" he began again, "I was afraid I wanted to blacken him for personal reasons. And I couldn't do that. It's the personal that trips us every time."

"Oh, but I am to blame, too!" I cried. And then I told Lazarus's story. "And I knew I ought to get Uncle Lew's advice," I confessed. "But it was so horrid, I couldn't bear to have anything to do with it. And to turn on a man who had visited me; who—who—liked me," I ended lamely. "Oh, I couldn't! Is it too late? Lucian, do you suppose you will be read out of the party? It was my fault."

"No; mine as much," he insisted. "We might go to Tristram—I might—and tell him I know and I'll print unless he resigns the nomination."

"Is—is that blackmail?" I faltered.

"Why, no! Is it?" He laughed. "But if the strike holds out we may not be able to get out another number of *The Torch*. We'll see what Uncle Lew says. We might print a broadside and scatter it on street corners. *Dio mio*, do you suppose we've got to be as vulgar as all that?"

A cane reached between us from behind and tapped him on the shoulder. It was Nicholas again. He had a copy of *The Torch* in his other hand, and was trying to say something to us. We saw other copies of the paper in the back of the hall. Nicholas finally scribbled something on a card and passed it over to Lucian.

"I admire your nerve," we read, "but if there's a riot in this place you ought to be hung for it. Why, in the name of common sense, couldn't you wait till after the show to sell your firebrand?"

"What's he talking about?" said Lucian. "Does he think they'll fight in here because the scabs weren't wrecked? Whom would they fight? What a fool he is."

And just then I saw Bertha Aarons standing against the wall at the side of the room, her head bent over a copy of *The Torch*. As I looked, she lifted her face—a distorted, livid face; and she tore *The Torch* across and across.

"Oh, look at Bertha Aarons!" I exclaimed.

But Lucian said, "S's'h'h, here they are at last!" And the speakers and other dignitaries came filing in upon the platform.

There were some fifteen or twenty—an impressive company; among them a Presbyterian minister, an Episcopal clergyman, the president of a college, the head of the Charity Organisation Society, a couple of lawyers, a professor of economics, — a woman, — Tristram, of course, the marchese, my Cousin Pauline, Helen. Cyrus came last, looking particularly absent minded, a strange little half-smile on his lips, and vision in his eyes.

“Far from this our war,” Lucian quoted softly.

But I said, “No; not as far as he looks.”

All around us the Italians were saying, “Ecco lo! Ecco il signore Americano!” and nudging each other and smiling. One of them even shouted, “Evviva il Signor Emery!”

“Think of his wanting to leave it all!” Lucian whispered. “Think of his pining for prayerful solitudes when he can be in the thick of a fight like this! If ever anything were clear, it is that we’ve got to stay in the struggle—the general struggle I’m talking about now, that this scrimmage is a part of—and see it through.”

But the chairman—one of the lawyers—was introducing the first speaker—a member of the state legislature—who proceeded to expound:—The evils of internecine controversy; why it was impossible that America should ever have another civil war; why it was incumbent upon the government never to take sides in economic disagreements, never to legislate for a class. His manner was the heavy fatherly, his rhetorical device was platitude. He spoke over long and the audience grew restive, shuffled its feet, rattled its newspaper—there seemed

to be a great many copies of *The Torch* selling. But at the end, when he reminded his hearers casually of other strikes in other cities, where the troops had been called out, the silence was so threatening, so sinister, that he lost the thread of his discourse, trailed on, a helpless word or two, and stopped.

For an ominous second there was no sound. Then he rallied, and his voice, half a tone higher than before, over-rode the stillness hurriedly.

"Of course—that is to say—not that we anticipate—not that you or I anticipate anything of that kind in this instance——"

Nervously blithe, he gave us his reasons for this optimistic certainty: our deep sense of responsibility as citizens—Americans first of all, capitalists and trade unionists afterwards——"

A voice in the back of the room yelled "No!" but another said, "Speak up, capital!" and the mood of the audience dissolved in laughter.

The legislator smiled as if he were faint, and mopped his forehead. He would take only one more moment of the meeting. The panacea followed, the proposal for a council of arbitration—which the next speaker would explain.

There was perfunctory, scattered applause—but I saw no working people clapping.

The chairman was sure that we should all be particularly interested to listen to the next speaker, both for what he had to say, and for what he was. His intellectual achievement was stressed, his unselfish patriotism—he had left the congenial quiet of his study at the city's call—his chivalric pity—no one had worked harder to bring about a solution of

the present difficulties. This new proposal for arbitration, differing in certain essentials from other proposals which had been made earlier in the strike, was his own idea; and what more fitting than that he should explain it. The next speaker, in brief, was Tristram Lawrence.

There was a queer stirring throughout the hall. Tristram made his bows—looked out on the audience—and a woman at the side of the hall laughed, a loud, deliberate laugh of insult. Tristram's face half turned, involuntarily, toward the sound. Then a man laughed, blatantly. I saw him—it was Lazarus. Then another woman, three or four—and the mob had caught the cue. Like fire in a high wind, outrageous insolent laughter flamed through the hall. Tristram backed one step, then tried to hold his ground, mouthing unheard into the hysterical clamour, making ineffectual gestures.

"What is it? What is it?" Lucian and I were staring into each other's faces.

People began to stand up—to scream foul words—unintelligible taunts. "Compensations, are there?"—"Infected with Socialism."—"Purify him." The air was thick with oaths, and with tattered, waving copies of *The Torch*. Some one thrust the paper under our eyes—and there it was: the interview between Tristram and the merchant. *The Scholar in Politics. The Three-Cornered Candidate Cornered*, was the title.

"Cuthbert!" I gasped.

"Stand up," said Lucian. "Safer."

In a moment there would be no more laughter, there would be fury, screaming.

"If they break for the platform, go with them—we can't hold them back—too many behind," Lucian said.

And then, at the fury's edge, there was a tremor, a quenching hesitance. The laughter wavered—sank.

Cyrus had touched Tristram on the shoulder—stood now in Tristram's place, quietly waiting, smiling, shaking his head ever so slightly in deprecation of the noise. And as suddenly as it had arisen the laughter died, as the wind dies. And among the belated ripples and gusts one began to hear raucous Italian voices shouting—" *Silenzio*—shut up!" And other voices—"Sit down!" and others—"Quiet!"

Cyrus waited until the last voice was still.

"Think of my little brother's being able to do this!" whispered Lucian. "A close call, Clara, and all my fault. I guess we're in for a libel suit. Oh, jolly!"

"Your fault? Oh, no!" I protested.

"T'sss!" said the woman next to me. "*Vuol' parlare*," indicating Cyrus.

II

I have the stenographer's report of Cyrus's speech beside me, as I write. No newspaper ever printed the whole of it. It was old news when the newspapers got to work again, Tuesday. They contented themselves with mentioning it, in retrospect, and deprecating its inflammatory character, while eulogising the speaker's young idealism.

When all the rustle had died down, all the admonitory voices were stilled, Cyrus said:—

“ You may not like what I have to say.”

He paused significantly. There was an embarrassed shuffling in the audience.

“ Shall we close the meeting? ”

The crisp brevity of the question made one blink. Then—its meaning penetrating—scattered voices cried —“ No; no!” —“ Speak!” —“ We like your speak!”

“ I shall speak as a Christian. There are a great many Jews here, a great many atheists.”

“ We giff you a fair show,” said a voice in the middle of the hall. “ A real Christian, he’s a curiosity.”

“ If I begin I shall want to go on to the end. You would, you know, if you were I.”

There was a pleasant ripple of laughter, that died away, decorously, after a moment.

“ This is my little brother!” whispered Lucian.

“ We are all peacemakers in this hall to-day.— Yes ”—his voice rode above the mutinous murmur. “ All peacemakers. We may disagree as to what peace is; we may disagree as to the best way to get it—by striking, by arbitration, by calling out the troops—but the thing we are all after is peace. You want to be able to earn a decent living under decent conditions; and we want you to do it. Yes, we do; every man and woman of us on this platform is here to-day because he, or she, wants to find a way to help you to earn a decent living under decent conditions. Don’t give me the lie!”

They didn’t. Their eyes were grim, but he had silenced them.

"Now, what have I to suggest? What's my Christian way of making peace? Is it the same as your trade union way?—Is it the strikers' way?—Are strikers Christian?—A strike is a fight—a form of war.—Is there any Christianity in this present strike? "

On the platform the dignitaries nodded at each other complacently. I looked along our row of seats, and every face strained up to Cyrus's. There was a slight tension in my neck. He straightened his shoulders and took breath. There was utter stillness throughout the hall.

"Christ said—'Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.' But I do not find Him anywhere saying, If any one smite thy brother on his right cheek, do thou stand by and hold thy hand while thy brother is beaten to death. He does not say, If any man take away thy brother's coat, let him strip thy brother naked and cast him out to freeze. He does not say, Whosoever shall compel thy brother to go a mile, do not thou interfere even though he harness thy brother to a treadmill. No; He said—'This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' "

There was a tremendous outburst of applause.

There was cheering. Some of the dignitaries on the platform, behind Cyrus, glanced sidewise at one another. The Presbyterian minister murmured something to his Episcopal brother, who smiled behind his hand. The chairman glanced back uneasily over his shoulder at Tristram, made a motion as if to consult him, then thought better of it. But the noise was brief, people were eager to hear more. When Cyrus began again there was a glow in his quiet voice; and the great audience glowed responsive.

“Me you may smite; but my brother—No!—Me you may rob, me you may starve, me you may bind in the treadmill of sweated labour; but my brother—No!—No!”

And there went a great cry—was it anguish—was it triumph?—through the hall.

“Well then our question—Is the strike a Christian way of laying down one’s life for one’s friends—for one’s brothers?”

“Understand me:—To riot against scabs in the streets is not to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. To steal out at night to wreck a train filled with workmen who do not happen to believe in trade unions, is not to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. But to refuse to work for a wage on which your brother must starve; to refuse to work at all unless your brother be given wages and industrial conditions that shall keep his soul and body in health; to endure hunger, cold, nakedness, even unto death, that your brother may live—this, this it is to love your brother as yourself! This is the point at which resistance and non-resistance meet and mingle, and become as one.

"It rests with you—strikers—to make your strike holy—or hellish. It rests with you to make this general strike the holiest of all strikes, the beginning of the world's industrial peace. Oh, you, union men in organised trades with a living wage, who have gone out because your brothers in their sweated trades are helpless to help themselves—you love much!—But can you keep it up? Can you really die that they may live? I hear that to-morrow the teamsters go back to work—is it true? I hear rumours of this and that organisation filtering back to its job. Is it true, my brothers? But the garment workers have not won their cause yet, their righteous cause. Why did you come out if you didn't mean to stay out—if you didn't mean to lay down your life?—You thought you would bluff the capitalist—was that it?—You thought you would frighten him? You will when you lay down your life; not before. When you lay down your life he will know that his hour has come—for he cannot live without you. Then you shall save your own soul, and his—in spite of him. This, brothers, some of you call Socialism. Allow me to differ with you—it is Christianity. It was Christianity before Socialism was born. Will you follow it, or will you, for the sake of a bluff, and because you love yourself better than you love your fellow-men—plunge us into anarchy to-morrow? *If you begin to go back to work you are lost.* Oh, if I could speak as one of you, if I were laying down my life, a striker in this strike, I think I could make you listen, I think I could persuade you to this peace-making! But I am a rich man; between you and me there is a great gulf fixed. I cannot find a way

to lay down my life for you. You have heard how hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God. You must save one another, that is your privilege. Oh, blessed, blessed are ye poor! "

We sat hushed as if it were indeed a benediction. Then some one broke into subdued sobbing, and the applause came thundering about our ears. For several minutes after Cyrus had sat down it rose and fell, rhythmical, overwhelming, a great wave of cheering that lifted our voices up out of our hearts and soared with them, and sank, and soared again. I shall always remember Lucian's face as he sat beside me cheering his brother.

On the platform there seemed to be consultation. There was delay in introducing the next speaker. The applause had at last dwindled to a spasmodic, intermittent clapping.

"If they have any sense they'll close this thing up now," murmured Lucian.

"They will never let it end on that note," I replied. "How can they, with their principles? And they evidently haven't seen *The Torch* yet."

"Jove! They're not going to let *him* try again? " Lucian leaped up in his seat, for Tristram, in hurried conference with the chairman, was rearranging his notes. "Heavens! Can't we send up a copy of the paper, a note, something? He mustn't! He mustn't!" He caught Tristram's eye, and motioned him back. I suppose it was the worst thing he could have done; for Tristram looked at him, and at me beside him, and came down to the very edge of the platform.

"As the days are short," he began rapidly, "and

there is no way of lighting the hall, we shall have to close the meeting in about fifteen minutes."

There was a good deal of noise all about—whistles and cat-calls—but Tristram's voice, strained, but resolute, kept on; and the people, whether from surprise at his persistence, or curiosity to hear him, or because Cyrus had momentarily softened their mood, at last subsided into comparative quiet.

Very briefly and clearly he put the scheme of arbitration before them as he had outlined it to me the night before, except that the Council of Arbitration had been expanded from six to nine. He gave the list of names—three from the employers, three from the unions, three from the public—two of these to be Helen and Cyrus—there was approving applause.—And the strike to be called off pending the decision of the council.

"No!" shouted a metallic voice at the side of the hall. And in all directions the word was taken up.—"No!"—"No!"—"No!"—"No!"—a storm of noes.

"And the council to delay the decision till after the election?" shouted the metallic voice. "No! I say. There will not be a calling off of this strike *until the council makes the decision.*"

We could not make out the man's face in the dusk, although he had mounted his chair, but the intonation was Lazarus's unmistakably.

"No!"—"No!"—"No calling off!"—the people shouted.

"Election?" roared a heavy Irish voice. "Friends of labour, I ask you, will any self-respecting working-man vote for that son of a bitch—yes, him?—I ask you will any——"

"No!" — "No!" — "No!" — "Kill him!" — "Throw him out!" — "Kill him!" — "He'll fool our girls, will he!" — "Call him down!" Strange epithets in Yiddish, in Italian, in unprintable English hailed through the air.

"There will be no calling off of this strike until the decision is made." Lazarus's voice cut through the tumult like a steam-hammer.

"No!" — "No!" — "You're right!" — "Throw him out!" — "You're right!"

"And not then if the people don't like the decision."

"The people!" — "The people!" — "The voters!" — "Throw him out!"

"There won't be a calling off of this strike till the people are satisfied. Mr. Emery is right——"

"Emery!" — "Emery!" — "Emery!"

Even through that tremendous cheer the steam-hammer made itself heard—"Mr. Emery is right; we got to hang on, even if we die for it!"

"Die for it!" — "Yes!" — "Yes!" — "Emery!" — "Emery!" — "Emery!"

Trailing after this second cheer came Tristram's insistent voice:—

"I am a peacemaker too, and I tell you on authority, if this state of anarchy isn't checked by another twenty-four hours the federal government will take a hand. The troops——"

Menacing voices, menacing hands flared, shadowy, everywhere.

"I say I *am* a peacemaker. But you know as well as I do that all this talk of holding on is futile.—*You can't hold on——*"

Vile epithets were pelting him from every corner

of the hall. The air was full of curses. Demons seemed to be dancing on chairs.

"I don't care who says you can——"

There was an unmentionable epithet.

A shrieking, infuriate something hurled itself on the platform, and there was a man grappling with Tristram—no—not with Tristram—with Cyrus—this dusk!—No—Cyrus had tripped and fallen—No?—No!—Who had fallen?—If one could see!—Who?—Cyrus?—Who?

And then that terrible cry:—

"E morto!—E morto!"

And between us and the platform ten rows of struggling, screaming men and women.

And Lucian's voice crying—"My brother!—my brother!—Give way!—My brother!—Let me pass!—My brother!—My brother!"

III

We found him in the little bare ante-room that is always at the back of platforms. A doctor and a clergyman came out as we got to the door.

"Go in quietly!" said the doctor. "Yes; still living. I have sent your mother home with the marchese to get his room ready.—No; I do not think we shall get him there; but she excited him—it was better for them both. Call me if you need me, I shall be here."

I noticed that the clergyman, a man with grey hair, was crying.

Helen had had the janitor's mattress brought up

and laid on the dusty floor. There was one window, opening on an air well. Helen had a lighted candle in her hand, and she stood behind Cyrus, at his head, so that the light should not shine in his eyes.

He smiled when he saw us. "My two!" he said faintly. And to Lucian, "Don't mind!—You know, I'm not keen about it all—the way you are.—It will be a relief to tackle a new set of problems."

Lucian could not speak. We were kneeling beside the mattress.

"Don't mind!" he said again, more faintly. "I don't love it the way—you—do. That's—where I fail—lacking love. I'm only—conscience."

Then I whispered, "Greater love hath no man than this——"

"But I'm not fond of Tristram," he replied. "It was instinct—what any man does—when he sees another attacked. I sprang automatically."

"The others shrank back automatically," commented Helen, in a colourless voice.

"Helen?"

At his question she came where he could see her—shielding the candle with her hand.

"Don't forget the Bandinis. Their rent is due to-morrow. Lucian will advance the money. And Lorenzino—comes out of the hospital—next week. And—Lucian—they must not prosecute—that poor mad fellow.—They must not—he did not mean——"

"Don't be anxious," Helen whispered. "He killed himself. It's all right."

"Oh—poor boy!"

After that he lay quite silent, looking at me, never at any one else again. And I put my hand on his.

And I kissed him, and kept my eyes in his. We did not need to speak.

At the very end he lifted his head from the pillow and repeated those lines of Jacopone's, "By despising mine own will I set myself free."

"Quanto avvilia il suo volere
Tanto sale in libertade."

he said; and then, lying back again: "My will—my desires; death cannot free me from these chains—only I."

And his eyes no longer saw me.

But it was Helen who knew that he had gone. She stooped and kissed him on the lips.

CHAPTER VI

THE GLEAM

I

POSSIBLY the sun shone and the sky was blue, those next two days—I know there were two days—but I remember only night, moving continuous round and round the clock; night without moon or star, a-shudder with dreadful spasms of sound—and yet more dreadful silences. Always, after the volley of rifles, there would be a moment of piercing stillness, as if the whole world had been slain by violence. Always, after the trampling clatter of horses' hoofs, there would be a sudden hush. Once, I remember, I thought the moan of the mob was the wind moaning; it came and screamed at our street corner, where a cordon of soldiers shot it down and scattered it. At startling intervals the fire bells pealed. Near the end of the long, dark vigil there was a dynamite explosion somewhere so near that the glass in our windows was shattered. And in the midst of all this tumult of death and dying, our boy lay wrapt in his eternal quiet. In the corners of his young, unsmiling mouth wistfulness still lingered, wistfulness and patience and heart-break. He looked so tired.

Sometimes his mother came into the room and flung herself down beside him and begged him to forgive her—and had to be led away and soothed.

Sometimes the marchese wandered in and looked with uncomprehending pity at that pure face, and said, "It is best," in a tone of resignation and relief. Lucian's eyes would meet mine then, scornful and protesting. We sat there together, long hours, silent.

The second day Uncle Lew brought Helen. Standing in the doorway of the drawing-room, behind her, he beckoned me and Lucian. And we left her alone there.

As we went across the hall to the dining-room my Cousin Pauline ran suddenly out of her room, crying and wringing her hands and calling Cyrus; and when she saw Uncle Lew she went to him, piteously, saying—"I have done this; I, I! I would not let him go when he asked me to. He would have been living now if I had let him go, I was selfish." She clung to him, wildly searching his face for contradiction.

"You were; you sure were; real human and selfish." It is impossible to give an impression of the comforting tenderness of Uncle Lew's voice.

Staring at him, bewildered but docile, she let him lead her into the dining-room and put her in a chair.

"What was it you said about sinning against the Holy Ghost—down at the office?" she whispered, still clinging to him.

"I don't remember, dear marchese—I say so many fool things." He smiled gently, reassuringly, as one smiles at a frightened child.

"I have killed him," she whispered, "I, I!" And she began to weep again.

Uncle Lew took her two wild hands in his. "No;

you haven't," he said. "And if you had?—I killed my wife. We have to bear these things."

It was strange to see the hysterical look lift off of her face, like a veil; to see the normal, startled question in her eyes, on her lips. "You—your wife?" And then leaning towards him pityingly—"Oh, no; you mustn't look at it that way."

"No! you mustn't," he repeated. "I had to learn that. You will learn it, too."

She sat quiet with her hands in his for a little while, and then her lip began to quiver, and the tears welled into her appealing eyes. "I would not let him go away and say his prayers," she sobbed. "See! his little book!" She fumbled in the pocket of her wrapper and drew out a tiny manual of devotion all rubbed and worn. She kissed it and cried over it, and at last said she would go and lie down. At the door of her room she turned—"If I learned to pray—he would like it?"

When she had shut her door we went back to the dining-room, and Uncle Lew said:—

"I hunted Cuthbert up this morning. He has kept out of my way; but I found him."

"I cannot imagine Cuthbert contrite for anything he had ever done," I said rigidly.

Uncle Lew gave me a deprecating look.

"I do not blame him for thinking the interview ought to be printed," said Lucian. "Tell him that, will you?"

"But I do blame him," I interrupted, "for selling *The Torch* at the mass meeting, when he knew what the effect of the interview would be. It was a wicked, a wantonly wicked and unprincipled thing

to do. It was—death; and he knew it would be. I cannot forgive him.”

“Now, now, Clara!” Uncle Lew commented mildly. “Try to realise that Cuthbert thought he was launching the Revolution. He thought it was up to him as a loyal Marxian and party member to press the button. It was an exalted moment for Cuthbert.”

“Yes,” agreed Lucian. “He has lived up to his lights—Cuthbert has—which is more than can be said of you and me, Clara.”

“Oh—do you call hatred, and spite, and gross self-seeking, and self-conceit, lights?” I cried.

“I found him in his room in his boarding-house,” said Uncle Lew. “He hadn’t eaten anything since it happened; he hadn’t had his clothes off, or slept. When he saw me, he said, ‘I killed him. O God! no new economic system can ever change that.’”

“Oh!—I will go to him!” Lucian said. “Where did you leave him, Uncle Lew? I’ll go now.”

“I sent him down to the Socialist headquarters on an errand, after I’d made him eat. If you can think up something to keep him occupied, do!”

“I do not want to forgive him,” I insisted. “But tell him it was not all his fault—it was our fault, too.”

“It was my fault for not looking over that last page after it was set up.” Uncle Lew patted my hand. “Helen told me she must be back at the settlement at four”—he glanced at his watch. But Helen had not waited for me, she came into the dining-room as Lucian went out.

“Clara,” she said quietly, “there is a little note-

book that has all of Cyrus's engagements and obligations in it—the people whose rent he pays—and when—and things of that sort. If you can find it and let me take it, I will attend to everything. It will be simpler to do it from the settlement than from here.—If you don't mind."

When I had found the little book Uncle Lew and I went into the drawing-room together for a moment.

"Darling boy—darling, darling boy!" he said, crying unashamedly. "I wonder if he's got his chance for solitude?—I doubt it. I very much doubt it.—The glorious company—the noble army—the goodly fellowship. Party methods in kingdom come, same as now, I shouldn't be surprised."

Helen sat waiting for us in the hall, her head braced rigidly against the high-backed Gothic chair.

"Stay with me, dear!" I begged. "Stay, while he is here! Don't go down there all by yourself!"

"He is not here," she answered.

"Helen, Helen—he lives! Believe it!" I pleaded.

She put me from her quietly. "I must go to old Mrs. Vannucci; he always sent her groceries on Tuesdays; she may be suffering."

After they had gone I went back to Cyrus. Everything was unwontedly still. I realised that the intermittent sounds of strife no longer came up from the street; that I had not heard them for a long time. Kneeling beside the empty tabernacle of my cousin's spirit, the only hermit cell that had been granted him, I tried to pray—for him. But, as always, myself intruded.

What did we pray for the faithful departed—Eternal rest?—Light perpetual?

When was it Cyrus had said, "If only I could be in accord, entirely, with some one, what a rest it would be?"—Party methods in kingdom come?

When was it he had said, "Can one be too individual?"—Party methods?

When was it he had said, "How can any one be anything but tentative in a civilisation so out of joint?"—Party methods, same as now?

When did he say—ah, yes, in the La Verna letter—"How can any one make decisions that involve living, in a world that so manifestly isn't fit to be lived in?"—Decisions?—But Christ made decisions, Cyrus; why not you—and I?

Decisions?—What to decide?—Light perpetual, illumine our groping darkness—his and mine!

"Oh, if I could speak as one of you," he said, two days ago, "I think I could persuade you to this peace-making."

But I could speak as one of them, if I would.—As one of them?—Could I?—By taking out a red card and paying dues? Was it as simple as that?—Was Lucian really one of them? What did class involve after all?—That glorious company of the apostles, chiefly ignorant fisherfolk; was Paul really one of them? There was friction between him and Peter, they say.

And I, calling myself a Socialist and believing that economic salvation shall be of the common people; that the truth is with them—where do I belong? If not with them, then where?—Whether they will or not; whether I will or not; is it not true that I am one of them—one with them?—Cyrus, dear, isn't it true?

"It worries me a good deal to be responsible for other people's sins"—when did he say that?—Years ago. But I am responsible for them, dear, whether I will or no; and what is worse, they are responsible for mine.

Eternal rest!—But doesn't one find it in sharing the load?

"Can one be too individual?"—But Cyrus, even Christianity isn't Christ against the world; it's Christ and His party against the world.

You said to me once—"Christianity is enough. Can you call yourself a Christian and say that anything else is needed?"—Cyrus, do you remember?—But the leaven of Christianity has made this ferment we call Socialism. Before Christianity came into the historical process, Socialism would not have been possible. It isn't a choice between Socialism and Christianity that I make. It isn't leaving Christ's party to join the Socialists'. Christianity is the road we travel to the kingdom of heaven, and for me, one of the sign-posts on the way is Socialism. I cannot help it, dear, it is so. I am going to join the Socialist Party.

"Arise, O Jerusalem, and stand on high, and behold thy children gathered from the west unto the east by the word of the Holy One, rejoicing in the remembrance of God. Amen."

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord; and let light perpetual shine upon them."

.

Lucian, coming in, touched the electric switch and

turned on some of the soft, shaded lights in the ceiling.

"They light?" I said.

"Yes. To-morrow the trolleys will be running. It is practically over. There never was any real fighting. They weren't prepared for that sort of leadership. They had no guns, you know. I don't know that a general strike can succeed unless it is nation-wide; and our nation is so very wide. In England it might be different."

He spoke softly, his eyes on his brother's sleeping face.

"Wilt thou wake us at dawn on the morrow, ere daylight is rife?

Wilt thou teach us, recruits in thine army, to battle like men?

Wilt thou lighten our darkness, O Lord, wilt thou bless us, and then

Wilt thou grant, though the people be dumb, yet thy martyrs through strife

Shall rise up out of death into life

Once again?

Amen, Lord, Amen!"

Then his face became suddenly distorted, and he flung up his hands with a desperate gesture, whispering—"O God! this contemptible ego of mine that can juggle with metres when my brother lies dead! That can savour the literary possibilities of a lost strike! O God!—O God!—They were real to him. He suffered with them in every fibre of his being—in every thought he was one with their suffering. See his dear face, all love-lit, all sorrowing, even though the spirit is gone. But I cannot suffer. I

can only enjoy, with a terrible enjoyment, the woe of the world."

I clung to him and tried to comfort him; and when he saw me crying he comforted me, till at last we were both quieter.

"If we had let him go away as he wanted to," Lucian said, "he would have come back to lead us.—Let us think so!"

"Yes, let us think so," I whispered. "He wanted to go away that he might become more one with the world, and God. He wanted to free himself from all the chains of self—do you remember?—And the vision beckoned him that way."

"And me it beckons in the party."

"And me."

II

For what follows, I have enough material in my diaries and correspondence, and in the newspaper files of the trial, to fill a volume as large again as this that I have written—if it were worth while. Possibly, in omitting the long and tedious evidence by which the jury arrived at its decision, my selective instinct errs. But to me it seems that those long days of quibble in the court-room add nothing to the revelation of Tristram's attitude, contained in his letter to me, but rather tend to belittle him to an extent that he hardly deserves.

The letter reached me in the morning mail the day after Lucian was arrested, in that short week that intervened between Cyrus's funeral and the election.

The arrest had found me wholly unprepared.

"But Cyrus saved Tristram's life," I said, when Lucian, after securing bail, came home and broke the news to me.

"Yes; but you see, Tristram is driven to it," he explained. "He has put the Reform Party into the worst kind of a hole. If he keeps the nomination and makes no move against us, he has queered the Reform vote; for the high-brows may be dull but they're moral, you know—they'll desert him on principle and let reform go hang. And if he resigns the nomination, he tacitly admits our imputation and involves the Citizens' League; for everybody will say they knew what he was up to and winked at it—they're saying it now. I don't believe they could get any workable candidate to take the nomination if he resigned it. And besides—if he doesn't protest against us, where's his own reputation? He'll be dead—oh, far more dead than—than——"

"Still, I do not see why he is driven to it," I replied.

Lucian smiled; and I persisted, "If he did it, how does he improve his reputation by lying about it?"

"To proclaim one's self a sinner may be comparatively easy, Clara; but to acknowledge one's self a fool?—Trissy?"

"But hasn't he spoiled his chances whether or no? And you say the trial cannot take place for six weeks or more—when the election will be ancient history?—I don't see——"

"He makes his protest. He does what he can to save his face, and the league's. It will have a certain weight with the uptown vote. Of course, he hasn't the ghost of a show of election, now that labour has

turned him down. Are you coming with me to break it to mother? Stress our ideals as much as you can, dear, and touch lightly on the arrest; she may not take that in as long as I am not actually in jail. We must muzzle the marchese before he comes from his club."

The next morning came the letter.

"MY DEAR MISS EMERY,—If I offend in addressing you; if, after my unpardonable offence against your cousin's memory, against you and all his family, there is still room for offending, nevertheless, I beg that in your unfailing courtesy you will not leave this letter unread. To you, as to no one else, I look for understanding of my action in this dilemma in which I am involved by the article in *The Torch*.

"You will be told that I yielded to pressure in proceeding against the paper. It is true; I did. But I ask you to believe that it was pressure from within, from my conscience, not from without. You, who said to me in *The Torch* office, not so long ago, that as between the individual and the cause it could never be a question of the individual—that one must learn to put the cause before the individual—you will understand that in outraging all my own instincts of gratitude and the world's canons of convention, I am trying, in very truth, to put the cause before the individual, the integrity of the Citizens' League before my own debt to the family of the man to whom I owe my life. I ask you to believe also, that although, as is evident, I have not been an apt pupil, I have endeavoured to square my motives at every point in the campaign with this ideal of yours—the cause

before the individual—which now is wrecking my life. If I have failed it has not been through impurity of motive.

“Life is made up of a succession of choices between two evils. You will contradict me here, because you are a woman, and the idealism of women deals with absolutes; the relatively good has no existence for them. For the sake of the integrity of the race, it is well that this should be so; but we men who must carry ideals into action know that mingled with our every good choice there is some modicum of evil; and that no matter how egregiously we may blunder, some good will result from our most evil choosing. I do not offer this in mitigation of my present action, however. My decision has been made in deep anguish of mind. Possibly I am only adding one more error of judgment to the chain which I have forged for myself during my brief political activity; but for the sake of the Citizens' League and all its individual members who have championed me, and still do champion me so trustingly, I do not see that I can do anything else.

“Shall I confess that I am not yet sufficiently schooled in your doctrine to endure without bitterness the realisation that you could so prefer the party before the individual, the candidate before the friend, as to deem yourself justified in withholding from me, the last time I called upon you, the knowledge, which you must have then possessed, that this blow was to fall?

“We grope from error to error like our cosmic prototype, that blind choice which rules the world, whose unforgivable error it is that I am living now,

while your Cousin Cyrus is struck out of life; that his purity and power are sacrificed to prolong my sullied ineffectiveness.

"I shall not intrude upon you again.—Sincerely yours,
TRISTRAM LAWRENCE."

It made me very unhappy, of course; the more so because I could not write him and explain that I had not known, the night he called, that the article was to be in the paper the next day. Lucian insisted that as the responsibility for the appearance of the article rested, at bottom, with him, it was both unnecessary and unwise to take the public into our confidence as to the way in which it had got into print. Cuthbert rebelled at this, and was very truculent—I liked him the better for it. But Lucian at last persuaded him that for the sake of the party, and for the sake of our own defence in the trial, it was much wiser that the Socialist candidate for mayor should not figure as the deliberate defamer of his rival.

"That's what it would amount to, you know," Lucian reminded him. "And there is already a general impression in polite circles that the Socialist Party is made up of a lot of blacklegs. We don't want to give colour to that impression. No, sir! The rôle of hero in this melodrama is bespoke; the limelight for mine. The rest of you will kindly retire to the flies."

"And you go to jail for a year, for me!" cried Cuthbert angrily. "Not if I know it!"

"No, not for you, my egoist; for the party," Lucian answered, smiling. "You hide-bound,

narrow-gauge, Marxian bigot, you! I know you think you're the whole thing; but I'm the party, too. And I've a right to keep you out of jail if it will save the party from scandal."

"By God, I always have to take a back seat for you!" cried Cuthbert.

"Tchutt, don't swear! lady present," said Uncle Lew.

"I don't know what you mean," Lucian exclaimed. "When have you ever——"

"None of your damn business! Leave me alone!" shouted Cuthbert. And then he dropped his head on his arms on the desk, and said, "Oh, say; let up! I'm all in; I don't know what I'm saying."

Uncle Lew went over and patted him on the shoulder. "It was a heroic act of insubordination, son; we're all of us glad you did it. But it was insubordination, just the same; now, wasn't it?"

"If only I hadn't started the sale—but I thought——" murmured Cuthbert.

"No; we're not talking about that—we're talking about the printing of the article. That was insubordination. The other was — was — an indiscretion. But for insubordination, when the chief here says take a back seat, why, it's only right. Discipline, you know. Marxians have a lot to say about discipline. I guess you'll have to take your medicine and step into the wings."

"I've been looking up publisher's liability," said Cuthbert slowly, his eyes bent on the desk before him, "and on a criminal charge of libel, if the truth of the defamatory matter is proved, the prosecution has to show that the defendant in a legal sense

actually participated in or authorised the publication, and with actual malicious intent. And I believe that generally in a criminal court negligence or blame must be proved, to get a conviction. You didn't know anything about that article. You can get out of it that way."

"Don't let's go over all that again," Lucian interrupted. "I'm not going to get out of it that way. You wouldn't have me, would you, Clara?"

"No; but I like Cuthbert to press it."

He lifted those wretched eyes of his to mine for a second. There was a miserable, grudging gratitude in them that brought a lump into my throat.

"They can't prove that you did it maliciously," I added.

"Oh, malice, legally, means only absence of lawful excuse," Uncle Lew explained.

Lucian smiled at my indignation. "The next thing for us to do," he said, "is to consult a lawyer and find out where we really do stand."

Just then Lazarus Samson came in. I had been wondering where he was. He had Bertha Aarons with him, and his smile flashed and flashed again across his face like an electric light whose connection is not perfect.

Assisting Bertha's elbow he brought her over to me.

"I knew you would be here, Miss Emery," he said. "I made her to come. She is Mrs. Samson now, just since twenty minutes."

Bertha was actually blushing, but she tried to carry off her embarrassment with bravado. "Yes," she acknowledged, "we went before a justice of the peace. Wouldn't that jar you!"

We gathered round them, shaking hands and congratulating them, and Uncle Lew and I kissed the bride. Dear little Lazarus could only smile and smile and smile.

"Miss Emery," Bertha said, brushing aside our hymeneal amenities, "do you know what? Markowsky's has agreed to treat with their girls as if they are a union. They don't say union, but they will make the bargain with one girl for all instead of every girl separate. If a new girl comes in and wants to make her separate bargain they say she can. So now it's up to us to head the new ones off and give them their orders before they see the foreman. It's something, ain't it?"

"But you won't be at Markowsky's now," I reminded her.

"No; but that's one good thing, because now I shall give my time with the Women's Trade Union League and get hold of those poor women that just have come over, and organise them,"

"How do you come in, Lazarus?" laughed Uncle Lew.

"Oh, I come in with a latch-key, all right, all right," he clicked gaily. "We got a little flat with a bathroom and a gas range. We shall go now to buy furniture. There is a damage sale from the dynamite explosion."

So presently he carried Bertha off; but before she went, as she was shaking hands again all round, suddenly with her hand in Lucian's her face changed. "Oh, I never believed in saints," she said, "but I do now. That was why I let the justice of the peace tie me up. I knew your brother would like it better.

The strikers can't do much to show the way they feel. He poured out his money like water through a sieve. Christianity! I bet the ministers that sat behind him on the platform got a shock."

It was after they had gone, and Cuthbert with them, that I showed Uncle Lew and Lucian Tristram's letter. Lucian read it over Uncle Lew's shoulder and finished first. His comment was characteristic:—

"I should like to kick him. Putting it all on you."

I hadn't thought of that.

But Uncle Lew said—"Poor devil! I reckon he does wish he was dead; and he'll wish it worse later, even if he secures a verdict against Lucian. This is the sort of thing that sticks to a man."

"Even if he clears himself?" I asked.

Uncle Lew only looked at me, and then at the letter, and back again at me, significantly.

"Perhaps," I suggested, "he is too proud to deny it. He thinks I ought to know that he doesn't need to deny a thing like that?"

"Then he wouldn't talk so much about the purity of his motives," Lucian blurted out disgustedly.

"But I want to think him honest," I pleaded.

"Well, dear, there's one thing you can bank on," Uncle Lew remarked, "and that is that he knows a heap more about honesty than he ever did before. Politics is a great eye-opener, especially for the men who get their knowledge of the abstract virtues out of Socrates and Plato. When they see the real thing they don't always recognise it—at first."

IV

The election was, as we had known it would be, an overwhelming defeat for the party of reform; but the effect on the Socialist vote surprised us all. *The Torch's* exposure of Tristram turned labour our way, and there was one unhappy moment, while the returns were coming in, when it actually looked as if Cuthbert had a chance of election.

Lucian, at the telephone repeating the figures, gazed at me in frank despair. Fortunately Cuthbert was down at the Socialist headquarters and could not see our faces.

"Now we see what we get for not being ready," sighed Lazarus. "That kid, he will set back our clock ten years in this town."

But the moment passed, and at the end of the evening the Machine candidate had come in on a respectable majority.

The Conservative press, all the papers in fact, laid the blame of the fiasco upon *The Torch*. Our irresponsible, anarchical, revolutionary, pernicious, etc., etc., policy was made the subject of editorial comment in all the important periodicals. Lucian's services to the community were contemptuously paralleled with those of Tristram, his "sensational and histrionic efforts after publicity" with the latter's "steady and statesmanlike subordination of himself to the people's need." Lucian did, indeed, cut a very poor figure in the eyes of most people at that time, I know; and he still does. I try to

console myself by remembering that Shelley cut a poor figure, and Ruskin; but literary analogies are poor comfort.

When the trial opened (it was set for the earliest possible date, and there were no delays) the sympathy of the "solid" members of the community was all with Tristram; even those who admitted that he might have played fast and loose with the strikers said, "Well, suppose he did," and went on to show how circumstances alter cases, and how he was in a tight place, and so forth and so on. And throughout the trial—it lasted only three days—public sentiment did not waver. The two great classes, capital and labour, never displayed their unconquerable antagonism more convincingly.

By the end of the second day I realised that Lucian had no chance. With what the marchese exasperatedly described as "his usual quixotism," he had insisted upon engaging as his lawyer a young Socialist comrade who had never before tried a case in court. The boy did very well, considering the odds against him; but Tristram's counsel was one of the most eminent men in the state. Somehow, he managed to create and sustain the impression that he was dealing, more in sorrow than in anger, with the regrettable escapade of a very naughty boy. The man who cleaned the windows in the department store office, and upon whom we had to depend to establish the truth of the published interview, was as wax in his hands. Lazarus gave him more trouble, but unfortunately lost his temper when questioned as to Bertha's relations with the plaintiff. I was let

off with a few perfunctory questions. The others were well badgered. Uncle Lew was treated as a corrupter of youth, as one who was old enough to know better.

Yet, despite the masterly cross-examination, despite the flabbiness of the window-washer, the untruthfulness of the published interview was not conclusively established. But, as the court's ruling, according to precedent, was to the effect that although in every case the truth of the matters charged may be inquired into if pleaded, nevertheless in criminal libel the truth does not amount to a defence unless it be also proved that the publication was for the public benefit—counsel for the plaintiff conducted the examination of witnesses both for and against the truth of the interview as if it were merely a concession on his part to the idiosyncrasies of the court and not germane to the issue.

Our defence, aside from our plea of truth, was conducted, of course, on the ground that comments on subjects of public interest, or on persons who have in any way chosen to invite the public attention, are not actionable unless it can be proved that the critic has used false and defamatory language out of malice, or gone beyond the facts which are properly before the public.

But counsel for the plaintiff—who, it happened, was one of the lawyers on the platform at the mass meeting—gave, in his summing up, such a picture of the chaos and violence of that afternoon, resultant upon the publication and sale of *The Torch*, that he had no difficulty in conveying to the jury the im-

pression that the publication was not for the public benefit. And the judge's charge strengthened this impression.

Yet, to our surprise, the jury was out two hours. When it finally came into court the foreman announced a verdict of guilty, but added that the jury was not agreed as to the conclusiveness of the evidence against the truthfulness of the publication.

The judge then gave the maximum sentence for libel in our state, a fine of \$5000.00 and imprisonment in the county jail for one year.

As we were leaving the court-house a messenger brought me a scribbled note from Lucian:—

“ I wish I could be with you to break it to mother. Play Leigh Hunt for all he's worth; he had quite a jolly time in jail serving time for calling the Prince of Wales a fat Adonis, you know. Make her see that it's victory after all, if you can.—But it leaves a bitter taste in one's mouth to call another man a liar, doesn't it? ”

V

It is for my Cousin Pauline's sake that I am spending this year in Italy. She had a very alarming nervous breakdown after the trial. The two shocks, following so closely one upon the other, of Cyrus's death and Lucian's imprisonment, completely prostrated her, and there was great danger that she would fall into religious melancholia. The physicians insisted that she must not be allowed to remain near

the jail; she was unhappy if not allowed to see Lucian as often as the rules of the institution permitted, and yet she came away from each visit increasingly distraught.

It was Lucian's suggestion that she come to Italy, and although at first she refused to consider the idea, she consented at last because he said it would make him happier.

"Remember how Cyrus loved Assisi and La Verna and Greccio, mother," he reminded her. "You will feel very close to him there."

So she and the marchese and I came over in February, and the change has to a certain extent restored her nervous balance, as the doctors hoped it would. The marchese does not think it has; with his violent anti-clerical tendencies it is next to impossible for him to regard her present attitude towards the Roman Church as sane. But I am sure that, for her, health lies that way. I shall have a hard time convincing him, but I must. Lucian agrees with me. His antagonism against the Church of Rome, though quite as strong as the marchese's, derives from a different philosophical basis, and is only a part of his general contempt for all organised Christianity. Then, too, Lucian is a poet.

As I sit here in the loggia, writing, I can hear the workmen scraping the walls of the long-disused oratory. It is to be restored to its sixteenth-century magnificence: so far my cousin Pauline carries the marchese with her—especially since he has discovered that the whitewash conceals a madonna and angels, possibly a genuine Bonfigli.

From America, our prisoner sends us joyous assurance of his unfettered spirit. He finished his long-delayed Ode to Russian Freedom in the first weeks of his imprisonment, and the magazines all write him that it is a splendid poetic achievement; but it is not timely, just now, and besides, it is too long. After that he wrote his pamphlet on the minimum wage, and now he has begun to write a history of Socialism. I suppose I ought to be content with that. A history of Socialism by a poet will at any rate be a unique contribution to the literature of the movement.

Occasionally a little lyric, written as it were in spite of himself, finds its way across the sea to comfort me. One came this morning—an *Aubade*. The marchese getting a glimpse of the page as I turned it, said with a smile:—

“Verses! After this is over I believe he will settle down and practise his *métier*, do you not?”

I did not say what I believed. There is still *The Torch*. Uncle Lew and Lazarus and Cuthbert keep their fingers on it; but they are in a minority since we reorganised it as a daily and increased the force. It is genuinely a party organ now, and is becoming more and more the mouthpiece of the younger Socialists, the great van of the Socialist army; a mixed lot they are, sons and daughters of immigrants, sons and daughters of privilege, proletarians and intellectuals, with youth and the ideal in common. Slowly, savagely, persistently, they are permeating the life of trade and the intellectual life of our cities with democracy, and choking out the bourgeois

ideals of individualistic greed. This "dust of souls" does indeed "fly into the light with trembling;" but ever and again it emerges "with prophecy."

Lucian and I are pledged to keep *The Torch* alight. And Lucian will inevitably go into politics. That is the next step, I suppose.

Settle down? No; the *Aubade* is an omen. One doesn't settle down with a dawn-song on one's lips.

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